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1840

# THE LIFE

OF THE

REV. JOHN OWEN, D.D.

ABRIDGED FROM ORME'S LIFE OF OWEN.

PHILADELPHIA:

PRESBYTERIAN BOARD OF PUBLICATION.

JAMES RUSSELL, PUBLISHING AGENT.

1840.

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## LIFE OF JOHN OWEN, D. D.

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DR. OWEN was descended from a Welsh family of great respectability. His father was a nonconforming clergyman, who had been educated at Oxford, and was reckoned a strict puritan.

John, his second son, was born in the year 1616, and after receiving the rudiments of his education, probably in his father's house, he was initiated into the principles of classical learning, by Edward Sylvester, master of a private academy at Oxford. This respectable tutor, not only taught Greek and Latin, but was employed to make, or correct Latin discourses for the members of the university. He lived to see a number of his pupils make a distinguished figure in the world, among whom, beside Owen, were Dr. John Wilkins, Dr. Henry Wilkinson, and William Chillingworth.

Owen must have made rapid progress in his studies, for at the early age of twelve, he

was prepared to enter the university, and was admitted a student of Queen's college, Oxford. He knew that he must depend on his learning to make his way through the world, as his father had nothing to give him. Nothing is commonly more unfavourable to genius and industry, than being born heir to a rich estate. It destroys that excitement which is absolutely necessary to counteract natural indolence; while it cherishes those feelings of pride and self importance, which are destructive of application and success.

When Owen joined the university, and while he continued at it, the leading members were not greatly distinguished for their learning and talents. Barlow is almost the only name which is now associated with learning; the others are either forgotten or unknown. Owen had Barlow for his instructor, in mathematics and philosophy. Barlow afterwards was chosen provost of his college, and in 1676, was made a bishop. He was in doctrine a Calvinist, in philosophy an Aristotelian, and in church government an Episcopalian. He was a man of eminent talents, and as great a master of the learned languages, and of the celebrated authors who have written in them, as any man of the age. Owen studied music, as a recreation from his severer studies, under Dr. Thomas Wilson, a celebrated performer on the flute, whom he afterwards made Professor of Music, in Oxford, when he rose to be Vice-chancellor of that university.

Owen's high attainments in learning, will not be any matter of surprise, when it is known, that during his whole literary course, he pursued his studies with incredible industry; allowing himself only four hours sleep out of the twenty-four. Every hour redeemed from sleep and other indulgences, is so much clear gain; but it is not every constitution which will bear such a rigid economy of time, and many by attempting it, have done irreparable injury to their health and comfort, and have ruined all their prospects of eminent usefulness in future life. Owen was blessed with a sound and vigorous constitution. He was fond of violent and robust exertion, and took frequent exercise of this kind, which is so far from being unbecoming in a grave student, it ought to be considered a part of that duty which he owes to himself.

On the 11th of June, 1632, Owen took his first degree, and in April 1635, at the age of nineteen, he took his master's degree. Literary degrees, when they prove a spur to industry and are conferred only on such as merit them, may be useful, but when they are indiscriminately bestowed, they lose their value, and are despised by the genuine scholar, and are sought after only by those on whom they can bestow no honour or distinction.

During his course in the university, the mind of Owen seems to have been little, if at all under the influence of religious principle.

Ambition to raise himself to some station of eminence in church or state, was the motive by which he was actuated, and which stimulated him to such laborious exertion in the acquisition of learning; but although he thought of no such thing, Providence was preparing him for extensive usefulness in the church; especially by his writings, which can never lose their value as long as evangelical truth shall be in esteem. The deficiency of supplies from his father, who was himself poor, was amply made up by an uncle, the proprietor of a considerable estate in Wales, who had no children of his own, and intended to make his nephew his heir, which design, however, was never carried into effect.

Previously to his leaving the university, which event occurred in his twenty-first year, he became the subject of serious religious impressions, but how they were produced, no means of ascertaining now remains. He had received a religious education in his father's house, and impressions then made, were probably now revived. But, however this may be, the convictions which now seized him were deep and pungent, so as not only to produce great seriousness of mind, but even to affect the health of his body. The spiritual conflicts, through which he now passed, appear to have been intended to fit him for the work which he was destined to perform at a future period; and probably communicated to his writings that tone of spiritual feel-

ing which is so manifest, and by which they are rendered so precious to exercised souls.

The immediate occasion of Owen's leaving the university was, a conscientious dislike of a new body of statutes, drawn up for its government, by archbishop Laud. By a compliance, his worldly interests would certainly have been promoted; but although not yet fully enlightened in the knowledge of the Gospel, yet he had an awakened conscience, which led him like Moses, to relinquish the pleasures of the world, rather than sacrifice the honour of his God. The course which he found it to be his duty to pursue, exposed him, as is usual in such cases, to the ridicule and contempt of his former acquaintances, who were actuated by different motives. He therefore left the university never to return, until Providence placed him at the head of this seat of learning. His perplexity of mind about spiritual matters, combined with his external difficulties, threw him into a profound melancholy. For several months he avoided almost all intercourse with men, during which time, he could scarcely be induced to converse with any one; and when he did speak, he manifested so much of a disordered mind, that he became as a wonder to many. Only those who have had experience of the bitterness of a wounded spirit can conceive of the distress which he suffered during this period. Compared with anguish of soul, on account of sin, all the afflictions

which befall a man are mere trifles. To this severe distress he appears to allude in the preface to his work on temptation, when he says: "The variety of outward providences and dispensations wherewith I myself have been exercised, together with inward trials, with which they have been attended, have left such a constant sense and impression on my spirit, that I cannot but give a serious call to men to beware." The principles which made it necessary for Owen to quit the university, he retained and acted on through his whole life. On one of the claims which were then made by the ruling powers, namely, the authority to "decree rites and ceremonies in the Church of Christ," he fully expresses his opinion in the following extract from his work on Communion: "I shall take leave to say what is upon my heart, and what, the Lord assisting, I shall willingly endeavour to make good against all the world, that that principle that the church hath power to institute any thing or ceremony belonging to the worship of God, either as to matter or manner, beyond the orderly observance of such circumstances as necessarily attend such ordinances as Christ himself hath instituted, lies at the bottom of all the horrible superstition and idolatry, of all the confusion, blood, persecution, and wars, that have, for so long a season, spread themselves over the Christian world; and that it is the design of a great part of revelation to discover this truth. And



I doubt not, but that a great part of the controversy which God hath had with this nation, for so many years, was upon this account, that, contrary to that glorious light of the gospel which shone among us, the wills and fancies of men, under the name of order, decency, and the authority of the church, (a *chimera*, that none knew what it was, nor wherein the power of it did consist, nor in whom it resided,) were imposed on man in the worship of God. Hence was the Spirit of God in prayer derided, hence was the powerful preaching of the gospel despised, hence was the Sabbath decried, hence was holiness stigmatized and persecuted. And for what? that Jesus Christ might be deposed from the sole privilege and power of making laws in his church, that the true husband might be thrust aside, and adulterers of his spouse embraced; that task-masters might be appointed over his house, which he never gave to his church, that a ceremonious, pompous worship, drawn from Pagan, Jewish, and anti-Christian observances, might be introduced; of which there is not one word or iota, in the whole book of God. This then, they who hold communion with Christ are careful of, they will admit nothing, practise nothing in the worship of God, private or public, but what they have his warrant for. Unless it comes in his name with ‘thus saith the Lord Jesus,’ they will not hear an angel from heaven.”

Owen’s leaving Oxford, gives occasion to

Anthony Wood, who was ever ready to calumniate the puritans, to charge him with perjury, for violating the oaths which he took upon his subscription. But it remains to be considered, whether the guilt lies with those who impose oaths and subscriptions on boys, which they cannot understand, and which when they come to be men, they repent they ever should have taken; or with those who are thus innocently ensnared. Before such conduct can be censured as perjury, the lawfulness of such oaths must be shown; for unlawful oaths require repentance, not fulfilment.

Before he left Oxford, he had received orders from bishop John Bancroft, nephew of the celebrated archbishop of that name, who was then bishop of the diocese of Oxford. Though he went out poor, and not knowing whither he should betake himself, he was not forsaken of Providence. Sir Robert Dormer of Ascot, Oxfordshire, took him in to be tutor to his oldest son. And when his service in this family was no longer needed, he became chaplain to Lord Lovelace, of Hurly, in Berkshire, where he continued until the breaking out of the civil war, on the occurrence of which event he was separated from his patron, who declared for the king, while he took sides with the parliament. The step which he now took had a mighty influence on Owen's wordly prospects; for his uncle who had supplied him with money at the university, and intended to leave him

his estate, being a determined royalist, was so displeased with his nephew for adhering to the parliament, that he immediately disinherited him, and settled his estate upon another, and died without leaving him any thing. Thus for the sake of principle and a good conscience, Owen threw himself out of an independent estate, preferring affliction with the people of God, to all worldly wealth.

The civil war has been by many attributed to the puritans, but most unjustly. A thorough investigation of the facts has shown, that the leading men in the parliament were Episcopalians, and that the object at first was, not to subvert the established hierarchy of the church, or to abolish monarchy; but only to obtain redress from arbitrary enactments, and to have some things reformed, in the existing state of the church. It is true, no doubt, that the puritans, almost with one consent, took part with the parliament, and this was natural enough, for they saw that nothing short of their extirpation was resolved on by the king. Nothing can be more uncandid than to charge those who acted in this manner with rebellion. The House of Commons forms an essential part of the British constitution, as well as the monarch. At this lamentable period, the constitution was divided against itself. War was openly declared between the king and parliament. Liberty and redress were the objects of the latter, arbitrary power of the former. Those who took

part with the king were liable to be punished by the parliament, and those who supported the parliament were in danger from the wrath of the king. As Owen never entered into politics further than to side with the parliament—and neutrality was now impossible—it will be unnecessary to enter into any discussion respecting the events of the controversy between the king and the parliament, which has already been attempted by so many pens. It will be sufficient to remark, that Owen gave abundant evidence that he was guided by conscience in the course which he pursued; and no one can doubt that the cause which he espoused was that of the rights and liberties of the people. It has been customary for writers, since the restoration, to rail against the puritans, as a factious, discontented, rebellious people; and to ascribe to them the death of the king, and all the evils which attended the sanguinary war which so long raged in the very heart of the kingdom. And many among us, join in this hue and cry, who are greatly indebted for the liberty which they enjoy, to the principles maintained by this calumniated people. On this subject, hear Dr. Thomas Scott, an impartial witness, as being a minister of the Church of England. “Many, no doubt,” says this pious and judicious writer, “who obtained an undue ascendancy among the puritans, in the turbulent days of Charles the First, and even before that time, were fac-

tions, ambitious hypocrites; but I must think that the tree of liberty—sober and legitimate liberty—*civil* and *religious*, under the shadow of which, we, in the establishment, as well as others, repose in peace, and the fruit of which we gather, was planted by the puritans, and watered, if not by their blood, at least by their tears and sorrows; yet it is the modern fashion to feed delightfully on the fruit, and then revile, if not curse, those who watered and planted it.”

Upon leaving the family of Lord Lovelace, Owen went up to London, an entire stranger, and took lodgings in Charter House yard. His religious feelings, though less distressing than formerly, were still far from being comfortable. During five whole years, was he subject to severe conflicts, before he obtained solid comfort; and hence we may see the reason, why so large a portion of his practical writings are calculated for the guidance and comfort of perplexed and distressed souls; and hence also, the deep and scrutinizing knowledge which he discovers of the plagues and troubles of the human heart, and of the workings of inbred corruption, even in those who have been effectually called. But after so long a night, the dawn at length began to appear. The glory of the gospel speedily dispersed his darkness, and produced feelings of joy, corresponding with his previous distress; and of the peace which he now obtained, he was never afterwards altogether

deprived. The particulars of his spiritual views and exercises, at this time, have not been communicated ; but it may be safely inferred from the manner in which he writes on the spiritual beauty and glory of the gospel, and of Christ the glory of the gospel, that he was favoured with very clear views on this subject ; and that they were frequently repeated. The same conclusion may be drawn from the secret and penetrating unction which pervades all his practical writings, and which gives them such a power over the feelings of all experienced Christians. It may well be doubted, whether in the whole number of casuistical writers, there is one, who in all respects is equal to John Owen. But although he has left us no detailed account of his religious views and exercises, when he first obtained permanent relief from his long continued perplexity and distress ; yet there are some circumstances recorded, which are worthy of attention. When he came to reside in London, he went to Aldermanbury church, to hear Mr. Calamy, a preacher greatly distinguished for his powerful eloquence, and for his boldness, as a leader of the Presbyterian party. On some account, Mr. Calamy did not occupy his own pulpit that day, and Owen was urged by the friend who accompanied him to leave the house, and go to hear Mr. Jackson, a man celebrated for his learning and eloquence. But here, again, he was disappointed, for

after waiting a while, a plain country minister ascended the pulpit, and after praying very fervently, took for his text, Matt. viii. 26, "Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?" The mere annunciation of the text produced a solemn impression on Owen's mind, and induced him to lift up his heart in fervent prayer to God, that He would bless the sermon to him. The prayer was heard; for in that sermon, the preacher was directed to answer the very objections which he had been accustomed to bring against himself: and although the same answers had occurred to him often, they had not before afforded him any relief. But now Jehovah's time of mercy had arrived, and the truth was received, not as the word of man, but as the word of the living and true God. The sermon was a very plain one, and the preacher was never known, but the effect was mighty, through the blessing of God.

On this remarkable event it may be proper to remark, that the truth necessary to our comfort may be familiarly known, and yet it will not be effectual to remove our distress, until accompanied by the special influences of the Holy Spirit. And again, we may observe, that God can bless the humblest instruments for the edification and comfort of his people, when those of the most splendid and exalted talents produce no salutary effect. And ministers should never be discouraged from preaching, at all times, and in high

places, because God is able to convey his word to the mind of some waiting soul; and on the effect produced on that unknown individual, as in the present case, the benefit of thousands may be suspended. Little did this plain, good man think, that his humble discourse was to be the means of relieving and comforting a mind, which was destined to communicate similar consolation to other wounded spirits, in a long succession; and in untold numbers, to the end of the world. From this unknown and humble minister, Owen received that relief from long continued spiritual distress, which he had never received from the most famous preachers. On that day he was twice disappointed in hearing great, and eloquent preachers; but if he had heard either or both of them, probably, the same blessing would not have been received. Paul may plant, and Apollos water, but it is God who giveth the increase, "so then neither is he that planteth, or he that watereth, any thing, but God who giveth the increase."

From this time, the darkness which had so long enveloped the mind of Owen, was dissipated; his health, which had been impaired by dejection of spirits, was now restored, and he was filled with joy and peace in believing. In his own opinion, one effect of his long continued darkness and distress was the subduing of his natural pride and vanity. The dross is so intimately incorporated with some specimens of ore, that it requires many



heatings in the furnace, to separate it; so some vices are so deeply seated in the constitution of some men, that they can only be expelled by a long and severe process of suffering. From his own experience, he moreover learned, that mere learning was utterly insufficient to accomplish the salvation of men, for with all his knowledge, he had found himself utterly unable to remove the darkness of his own mind. It may be truly said, that no teaching but that of the Spirit of God could ever have enabled Owen to write with such spiritual knowledge and unction as he has done, in many of his treatises. No doubt, he now began to make known to others that Gospel which he had found so precious to his own soul; but when this great man commenced his ministerial labours, cannot be ascertained. It is, however, exceedingly probable, that he began to preach somewhere in London, where he resided, when it pleased God to lift upon him the light of his countenance. This will be considered as nearly certain, when it is known, that while he resided in the Charter House yard, he commenced author, and the first work which proceeded from the pen of Owen was, the treatise entitled "*A Display of Arminianism*," in a quarto volume. The *imprimatur* is dated March 2, 1642. It is not an improbable conjecture of Mr. Orme, his biographer, that his perplexity of mind for years past, had arisen from difficulties connected

with the subject of Arminianism, for we can hardly otherwise account for the thorough investigation of these points, which is evinced in this treatise, written so soon after his deliverance. This work laid the foundation of Owen's reputation as a theological writer. The course of his studies, and of his personal experience, led him to take very discriminating, comprehensive, and decided views on this, which has not been the controversy of any one, but of every age; and among theological writers there is not one, whose views on these vexed points of doctrine, are more profound or more consistent. During his whole life he was set for the defence of that system which is commonly denominated Calvinism; although it might, with nearly as much propriety, be called *Owenism*; but ought not to receive its denomination from any man, for it is nothing else than the revealed truth of God.

Before the rise of Arminianism in Holland, the doctrines of Calvin were generally embraced by the theologians of England, as well as of other countries where the reformed religion prevailed. All the creeds, catechisms, and formularies drawn up before this period, furnish incontestible evidence of the prevalent belief; as also the theological writings published throughout the reformed churches. The Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England, although they are not explicit on every point, undoubtedly belong

to the system now called Calvinistic; and it is an incontrovertible fact, that Calvin's Institutes were used as a text-book in both the English universities. And although James I. opposed Arminianism upon its appearance in Holland, and wrote a book against the Arminian professor Vorstius, yet he encouraged those who held these doctrines at home; so that Arminianism takes its date in England, during the latter part of his reign. And what was tolerated and encouraged by the father, was raised to honour and power by his son, and soon became the prevalent system of belief in the English church. Its prevalence is thus noticed by Owen, in the preface to the first production of his pen, "Never were so many prodigious errors introduced into a church with so high a hand, and with so little opposition, since Christians were known in the world."

The great object of this work is, to give a view of the sentiments of the Arminians, on the decrees of God, divine foreknowledge, providence, the efficacy of divine grace, original sin; and, in short, all the leading doctrines of this important controversy. He extracts from the writings of foreign theologians, passages which contained the sentiments of the system, and then set down such answers as occurred to him; and then, at the close of each chapter, he gave a tabular view of the texts of Scripture which related to the subject. This work, therefore, was intended,

as its title imports, to be *a display*, not a full refutation of the Arminian system. The style of this work is more simple, and less characterized by the peculiarities of the author, than his later works. Sometimes there is an appearance of asperity, which may be attributed to the boldness with which the writers whom he opposes, impugned the truth of God. This work was received by the public with much favour, and immediately brought the author into notice and reputation with the adherents of the parliament; and, in consequence, he was presented to the living of Fordham, in Essex, by the committee for purging the church of scandalous ministers. His acceptance afforded much satisfaction to the parish and the surrounding country; and the blessing of God is said eminently to have attended his pastoral labours in this place. Many, from other parishes, resorted to hear him, and not a few, through the blessing of God, were led to the knowledge of the truth.

Soon after his settlement in Fordham, he married his first wife, whose name was Rooke. By her he had eleven children, all of whom died young, except one daughter, who married Roger Kennington, a Welsh gentleman. The match proving an unhappy one, she returned to her father's house, where she died of a consumption, in 1682.

By accepting the living of Fordham, Owen connected himself with the Presbyterian body,

who were then in their highest state of prosperity. The Presbyterian system of church government was, after mature deliberation, adopted by Calvin, and established at Geneva; whence it was propagated through all the reformed churches, except that of England, which, owing to peculiar circumstances, unnecessary to be detailed here, retained the Episcopal government. When the English hierarchy was overthrown by the parliament, the Presbyterian form was substituted in its place. Most of the ministers exiled from their country, during the bloody reign of Mary, became acquainted with the ecclesiastical regimen established at Geneva, and many of them adopted it as scriptural and expedient; and only waited for a favourable opportunity to carry their sentiments into practice. Nearly all the Puritans were inclined to Presbyterianism; although they would have been contented with a modified episcopacy, such as that which archbishop Usher recommended.

Although at the time of Owen's settlement at Fordham, the Presbyterians had greatly the ascendancy in England, yet presbytery was not yet introduced and established by law, which did not take place until the year 1645: it is probable, therefore, that Owen, though for a while connected with that party, was never the regular member of a presbytery.

The character of the Presbyterians of that

time, is fairly drawn by Baxter, in the "History of his own Life and Times," where he says, "The persons who were called Presbyterians, were eminent for learning, sobriety, and piety; and the pastors so called, were they that went through the work of the ministry, in diligent, serious preaching to the people, and edifying men's souls, and keeping up religion in the land." "But I disliked the course of some of the more rigid of them, that drew too near the way of prelacy, by grasping at a kind of secular power; not using it themselves, but binding the magistrates to confiscate or imprison men, merely because they were excommunicated, and so corrupting the true discipline of the church, and turning the communion of saints into the communion of the multitude, that must keep in the church against their wills, for fear of being undone in the world." "And I disliked some of the Presbyterians, that they were not tender enough to dissenting brethren, but were too much *against liberty*, as some were too much for it."

The worst feature of Presbytery, at this time, was the principles of intolerance adopted by them as a body. Their most celebrated preachers, as Calamy and Burgess, in their discourses before parliament, represented toleration as the hydra of sophism and heresy; and the floodgate to all manner of iniquity; which the civil authority ought to exert itself to put down. Their most distinguished wri-

ters wrote against religious liberty, among whom we are constrained to mention such truly excellent and learned men as principal Baillie of Glasgow, and Samuel Rutherford, professor of divinity; the first of whom wrote a "Dissuasive" against toleration, and the latter a quarto volume of four hundred pages against what he called, "pretended liberty of conscience." That such principles should have been adopted by good men is sincerely to be lamented; but they were the prevailing sentiments of the age; and it is altogether unfair to consider them as peculiar to the Presbyterians. They were held, with a very few exceptions, by all Christians down to this time, when more just views of the rights of conscience began gradually to dawn on the Christian world, at least on the protestant churches in Great Britain. But to make use of this to cast odium on any particular party, at this day, is certainly unfair. It is the same kind of prejudice, and I may say malignity, which among all the reformers singles out Calvin to be stigmatized for the part which he took in the apprehension and condemnation of Servetus; while it cannot be denied that Cranmer equally sinned against liberty; and all the reformers, however differing in other matters, were agreed in this, and the churches of Switzerland publicly expressed their approbation of the conduct of the great reformer of Geneva.

It is however to the honour of John Owen

that he was among the first to adopt correct opinions, on the subject of toleration, from which he never departed afterwards.

Owen's second publication, had some relation to church government. It was entitled, "The Duty of Pastors and People distinguished, &c." His object, in this treatise, was to steer a middle course between those who ascribed too much power to ministers, and those who gave too much to the people. It bears date 1644. "Some," says he, "would have all Christians to be almost ministers, others none but ministers to be God's clergy. Those would give the people the keys; these use them to lock them out of the church: the one ascribing to them all ecclesiastical power for the ruling of the congregation, the other abridging them of the performance of spiritual duties, for the building up of their own souls. As though there were no habitable earth between the valley, I had almost said the pit, of democratical confusion, and the precipitous rock of hierarchical tyranny." His object, therefore, was to show how "the sacred calling may retain its ancient dignity, while the people of God are not deprived of their Christian liberty." In this treatise he declares himself to be in favour of "that form of church government commonly called presbyterial, in opposition to that which is prelatical on the one side, and that which is called independent on the other." Afterwards, however, on a review of what he had



here written, he says, "I find that my principles were more suited to the judgment and practice of the Congregational men, than of the Presbyterian. Only I professed myself of the Presbyterian judgment, in opposition to democratical confusion; and so I am still, and so are all the Congregational men in England, that I am acquainted with. So that when I compare what I then wrote with my present judgment, I am able to find scarce the least difference between the one and the other, except in words."

In the beginning of his ministry, and, indeed, when he wrote the aforesaid treatise, Owen received the common prevalent opinions respecting religious liberty; but not many years afterwards, his views on this subject were materially changed, and he became the firm and unalterable advocate of the rights of conscience. He mentions a singular circumstance which occurred in relation to this subject: conversing with a learned friend on this topic, he argued in favour of restraint, while his friend strongly pleaded for religious liberty. Some years afterwards, meeting with the same friend, they found that they had completely changed sides; for now he was the defender of liberty of conscience, and his friend stood upon the ground which he had formerly occupied.

The parish of Fordham, before his coming among them, had been sadly neglected, and the people were overrun with ignorance, in

consideration of which he commenced the pastoral duty of catechising; and as suitable manuals were not then in existence, he set himself to compose two catechisms; the one, which he termed the "Lesser," to be committed to memory by the children; the other, "The Larger," to be used in family instruction, to aid the parents. These are sound in doctrine, and well adapted to the purpose for which they were composed. They are both strictly doctrinal; and the reason which he assigns for omitting practical duties, was his intention soon to publish an exposition of the Lord's prayer and ten commandments, with the Apostles' creed; which work, however, he never accomplished, owing to his removal from Fordham, and other causes.

An idea of the fidelity with which he exercised his ministry, and the solicitude he felt for his people, may be learned from an "Address to his Loving Neighbours and Christian Friends," of which the following is a specimen: "My heart's desire and request to God for you is, that ye may be saved. I say the truth in Christ. I lie not, my conscience bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, that I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart for them amongst you who as yet walk disorderly and not as beseemeth the gospel, little labouring to acquaint yourselves with the mystery of godliness. You know, brethren, how I have been among you, and in what manner, for these few years past; and

how I have kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have showed you and taught you publicly, and from house to house, testifying to all, repentance toward God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. With what sincerity this hath been performed, with what issue and success by you received, God the righteous Judge will one day declare. In the mean time the desire of my heart is, to be servant to the least of you in the work of the Lord, and in any way which I can conceive profitable to you, either in your persons or your families."

Such a light could not be long hid. The fame of Owen began to spread, and he was soon called to appear more conspicuously before the world. On the 29th of April, 1646, the monthly fast, he was called to preach before the parliament. The sermon which he preached on that occasion, and which was printed at the request of the house, was founded on Acts xvi. 9, and was entitled, "A vision of unchangeable free mercy, in sending the means of grace to undeserving sinners." This sermon is rich in gospel truth, and in it he urges the duty of sending the gospel to Wales and other destitute parts of the country.

This sermon, however, contains some of his new views on church government, which involved him in much discussion with the neighbouring ministers. His opinions being variously represented, he hastily threw toge-

ther his thoughts on the subject, and published them with his sermon. His object appears to have been to unite the Presbyterians and Independents in one body; at least to moderate their warmth. While he professed to agree in several leading principles with the former, he declares that he does not know any plan of church government on earth, which exactly coincides with his views. This tract contains an explicit declaration on two important points: 'the folly and uselessness of contention about uniformity, and the necessity and importance of toleration.' He also protests against giving men odious appellations on account of their religious opinions, and exposes the absurdity of that species of exaggeration which was but too common with all parties at that day.

Upon the decease of the sequestered incumbent of Fordham, the patron presented another person, by which means Owen was superseded; for when a minister was put in the place of one ejected for incompetency, he only held the living during the life time of the first incumbent, and upon his decease, the patron was again permitted to exercise his right of presentment. With his departure from Fordham, terminated Owen's connexion with the Presbyterians, from whose opinions on church government he had been deviating for some time before.

## CHAPTER II.

OWEN's deprivation of Fordham was attended with no loss, either of a pecuniary or spiritual nature; for the people of Coggeshall, a market town, about five miles from Fordham, gave him a pressing invitation to become their minister; to which the Earl of Warwick readily acceded, and immediately presented him with the living. The church in this place was a spacious and lofty building, and is still standing, and the pulpit in which Owen preached is preserved, though not now used. The immediate predecessors of Owen in this charge, were John and Obadiah Sedgwick, brothers, who successively occupied this living. They were pious and respectable Presbyterian ministers, and authors of various valuable works, which were then extensively read. The latter, whom Owen succeeded, was appointed a member of the Assembly of Divines at Westminster, and became the preacher of St. Paul's, Covent Garden, in 1646; and in 1653 was appointed one of the committee for the trial of ministers. In 1658 he departed this life at Marlborough, his native place, whither he had returned, after resigning all his preferments.

Coggeshall furnished Owen with a wider field of usefulness than the one which he had left. The congregation consisted of not less

than two thousand people, and his labours among them were attended with considerable success. The people were generally intelligent, sober, and religious; and between the pastor and his flock a strong mutual attachment took place, which was a source of much satisfaction to both parties. And nothing, probably, but circumstances which he could not control, would ever have removed him from this beloved flock.

Soon after Owen's settlement at Coggeshall, he adopted the principles of the Independents on church government, which he continued to hold and defend as long as he lived. This change of opinion, according to his own account, was in a considerable degree owing to a work of Mr. John Cotton, "Of the Keys," which he at first attempted to answer, but in the progress of his examination, he became a convert to the principles which he had designed to oppose.

From his own account, however, he was never firmly fixed in the principles of the Presbyterians, as then held; so that in speaking of his tract on the rights and duties of pastors and people, after this change, he declares that he found almost every thing expressed in this work, which he adopted afterwards; except that he had not made use of the proper words to express his ideas. And his opinions on the subject of church government, at last, will not be found very widely different from those of Presbyterians,

in this country, as he admitted the Scriptural authority for the office of ruling elders, and the expediency of synods for advice and consultation. This dissent was from the scheme of those who maintained rigidly, the *divine right* of Presbytery, and were intolerant to all who differed from them on this subject. American Presbyterianism has, however, been always tolerant to those differing from them as to the plan of church government; and the declarations of our Church, in the eighth chapter of the "Form of Government," show that the framers of our Constitution were no how disposed to exclude from their charity and fraternal communion, those Christians who differed from them in their views on this subject. The language of this formulary is, "It is absolutely necessary, that the government of the Church be exercised under some certain and definite form. And we hold it to be expedient, and agreeable to Scripture, and the practice of primitive Christians, that the Church be governed by congregational, presbyterial, and synodical assemblies. In full consistency with this belief, we embrace in the spirit of charity, those Christians who differ from us, in opinion or practice, on these subjects."

Though Mr. Orme, whom we chiefly follow in this compend, has thought proper to introduce into his biography of Owen, a full account of the principles of the Independents,

and of the steps by which Owen was led to espouse their cause, it is deemed inexpedient to enter further into the subject. This is not the proper place for the discussion of this controversy. It will, however, be proper to remark, that Owen actually carried his theory into practice, and formed a church at Coggeshall, on the principles of the Independents; which church continues in existence until this day.

About this time he published a tract, called, "Eshcol; or, rules of direction for the walking of the saints in fellowship according to the order of the gospel." This bears date, 1647. In the preface, he states four principles, as the basis of his rules, in which he considered that most persons, who were seeking a scriptural reformation were agreed. 1. That particular congregations or assemblies of believers, under officers of their own, are of divine institution. 2. That every believer is bound to join himself to some such congregation. 3. That every man's voluntary consent is required for his union with it. 4. And that it is convenient, that all believers in one place, unless too numerous, should form one congregation. He gives two sets of rules, one for the duty of the members of the church to their pastor, which are seven in number; the second, on their duty to one another, which are fifteen in number. In all these, there is scarcely a sentence or word



to which every Presbyterian would not assent; indeed they were so drawn purposely, as to exclude points of controversy.

His next work was on a more important subject, and required more profound research. It was entitled "*Salus Electorum*, or, The Death of death, in the Death of Christ." 'A treatise of the Redemption and Reconciliation, that is in the blood of Christ, with the merit thereof, and the satisfaction wrought thereby,' dated 1648.

This work was dedicated to his patron, the Earl of Warwick, a man of unexceptionable Christian character and great sweetness of temper; a valuable and steady friend to the persecuted puritans, and known while he lived, and long after his death, as the GOOD EARL OF WARWICK. The object of this treatise is an examination of that branch of the Arminian controversy, which relates to the nature and extent of the death of Christ. This subject had occupied the attention of Owen for more than seven years, during which time he read every thing which he could procure, written on the subject, either in ancient or modern times. The treatise is characterized by the clear and profound views, close reasoning, and satisfactory illustration, by which his later works were distinguished. It is divided into four parts. 1. He treats of the eternal purpose and distinct concurrence of the Father, Son, and Spirit, in the work of redemption. 2. He

removes the false and supposed ends of the death of Christ. 3. Arguments against the doctrine of general redemption. 4. An answer to Arminian objections to particular redemption.

Controversies, in the process of time, change their character to a considerable degree; and some views and statements in this able treatise, are not exactly such as would now be adopted by a skilful controvertist; yet it may be doubted whether this difficult subject has been more thoroughly handled by any one who has since written. Some opposers of Arminianism have maintained that the atonement was limited in its nature, as well as its design; so that it is in itself insufficient for any more than the elect, as Christ took upon him their sins, and theirs only. But this narrow view of the atonement has been rejected by consistent Calvinists; who have constantly maintained the infinite fulness and sufficiency of the atonement, intrinsically considered; and that its limitation is only in the design with which it was offered, and accepted.

Other defenders of particular redemption, have erred by holding such a transfer of the sins of the elect to Christ, that they are legally and in fact freed from all their guilt, before they are united to him, and believe in his name. They even maintain, that as Christ stipulated a full satisfaction for them in the covenant of redemption, therefore they

are truly justified from eternity; and the fact of their justification is made known to them when they believe. How impossible it is to reconcile this theory with Scripture, and how dangerous such an opinion is, we cannot stop here to inquire.

On the other hand, Arminians, and many who are not Arminian in other points, hold that Christ actually died for all and every man who ever has been or shall be born in the world. And many, of late, in order to maintain their doctrine of a universal atonement, have introduced a new theory of the nature of the atonement, making it, not a satisfaction to law and justice, and a real vicarious enduring the penalty of the law, which we had incurred, but merely a public exhibition or manifestation of the displeasure of God against sin, and a proof to all intelligent creatures of his purpose to punish sin, in all cases. This new theory entirely changes the nature of the atonement, or rather subverts the doctrine; and is far more dangerous than the Arminian doctrine.

For the salvation of a single sinner, a justifying righteousness is necessary. Such a righteousness as would accomplish this end, could not be provided without the Mediator's rendering a perfect obedience to the precepts of the law, and enduring its penalty by dying a painful and accursed death. The whole, then, of what the Saviour did and suffered, was necessary for the salvation of one sinner;

and by being imputed to one, is not lessened in its value to others. His righteousness, like his vesture, cannot be divided. Every believer receives a complete Saviour, and cannot do with less. But on account of the dignity of Christ's person, arising from his divine nature, his merit is infinite; so that no degree of guilt can be conceived, which the atonement is not sufficient to cover. If it had been the will of God to apply it to every individual of the human race, it would not have been found insufficient; and in that case, no other righteousness than that provided, would have been necessary. This is what is meant when it is said, that the atonement of Christ is sufficient for the whole world; but as the design in providing and making it was to save the elect people of God, he is said, with propriety, to have died only for them. As he says himself, "I lay down my life for the sheep." This last view of the sufficiency and extent of the atonement, is maintained by Owen in this work, and in all his other works.

That these were, indeed, the views of Owen on this subject, will be manifest from the following quotations: "It was the purpose of God, that his Son should offer a sacrifice of infinite worth and dignity, sufficient in itself for the redeeming of all and every man, if it had pleased the Lord to apply it to that purpose; yea, and of other worlds also, if the Lord should freely make them and would redeem

them. This is its own true internal perfection and sufficiency. That it should be applied unto any, made a price for them, and become beneficial to them, is *external* to it, doth not arise from it, but merely depends on the *intention and will of God.*" And on this ground he undertakes to show that the gospel may be preached to all men. "Because," says he, "the way of salvation which it declares, is wide enough for all to walk in. There is enough in the remedy it brings to light, to heal all their diseases, to deliver them from all their evils. If there were a thousand worlds, [in the same condition of sin and misery,] the gospel might, on this ground, be preached to them all, [and they might be saved thereby,] if so be they only believed in him, which is the only way to draw refreshment from this fountain of salvation." No sinner, therefore, perishes for want of a sufficient atonement; and the free offer of the gospel is not God's decree of election, which is secret, nor that Christ died for them in particular, but the revealed sufficiency of the atonement for all who believe in it.

An answer to this work of Owen was published in 1650, by Mr. John Horne, entitled "The Open Door for Man's approach to God: or a Vindication of the Record of God, concerning the extent of the Death of Christ." The author was minister of Lynn, from which he was ejected in 1662. He was an Arminian on the point of redemption, but not on

other points; and is said to have been an excellent man. He appears to have written a number of controversial tracts, which have long since fallen into oblivion. He treats Owen respectfully, and, for the most part, employs the common Arminian arguments; yet he differs from them on the subject of election and grace. His answer is said to have been acute, and on it he proceeds, chapter by chapter, through the whole work. Owen, however, made no reply, but declares that if he had found one uninterested person who said it deserved an answer, it should not have remained so long without one.

While Owen resided at Coggeshall, Lord Fairfax took up his head quarters there, and formed an acquaintance with him; and, indeed, for some time, Owen appears to have acted as his chaplain, and to have entertained a very high opinion of him. And according to Milton's estimate, his esteem was not misplaced, for he eulogizes him "as one who united the utmost fortitude with the utmost courage; and the spotless innocence of whose life seemed to point him out as the peculiar favourite of heaven."

While the army lay in the neighbourhood, Owen preached two sermons in it; the one at the surrender of Colchester, the other to the parliamentary committee, upon their deliverance from prison. In these sermons, which were published, he has some strong expressions respecting the impropriety and

iniquity of human interference with religion; and some of the sentiments of these discourses have been taken hold of by his opponents and those of his party, and have been made a handle of against him.

On the 31st of January, 1649, Owen was called to preach before the parliament, the very day after the decapitation of the king. This must have been, indeed, a most trying occasion. Certainly, whatever might have been his private sentiments respecting that event, he never could have courted the station which he now occupied. It may, with some, involve him in the guilt of the regicides, to have been selected by them to preach on such an occasion. The only apology which can be made for him, is one which he offered on another occasion, 'that his superiors were persons whose commands could not with safety be gainsayed.' The fact, doubtless, shows that he was in favour with those men who brought the king to the block; and it shows that, by selecting him as being a minister of reputation, they wished to sanction what they had done by the weight of his name. If they expected that he would defend, or apologize for their measures, they were entirely disappointed; for in the whole discourse there is not a single allusion to the bloody deed. The text selected for the occasion was Jer. xv. 19, 20. The subject—"Righteous zeal encouraged by divine protection."

A writer, in speaking of this discourse, remarks, that "he appeared before a numerous assembly, at a critical juncture, and was not ignorant of the tempers of his principal hearers. He was then a rising man, and to justify the late action was the infallible road to preferment; but his discourse was so modest and inoffensive, that his friends could make no just exception, nor his enemies take advantage of his words another day." Nevertheless, expressions in this discourse were afterwards tortured into an approbation of the deed which had been perpetrated; and more than thirty years afterwards, the University of Oxford condemned the positions contained in this sermon, as 'pernicious and damnable,' and ordered it to be burnt before the members of the university. The sermon being still extant, every one that chooses can judge of its character by inspection; but that which rendered this publication truly important, was the Essay on Toleration which accompanied it.

Owen was not the first person who pleaded for liberty of conscience; but he was the first who openly inculcated this doctrine, while his party had the ascendancy. In this tract, he answers the arguments brought from Scripture for the persecution of heretics, and maintains by unanswerable arguments, that the civil magistrate has no right to meddle with the religion of any person,



whose conduct is not injurious to society, and destructive of its peace and order.

It does not appear, that Owen's silence respecting the death of the king, lost for him the favour of the parliament; for, in the following April, we find him again called to preach before them. On this occasion, when also the chief officers of the army were present, he delivered his famous sermon on the "Shaking and translating of heaven and earth;" for which the next day, he received the thanks of the house, and an order to print it. This sermon is long, and contains many fine sentiments, expressed with vigour. It may be found in the fifteenth volume of his works. This sermon, introduced Owen into acquaintance with Oliver Cromwell, who now heard him for the first time, and was much pleased with the sermon. It was the purpose of Owen to have gone home, two days after preaching this discourse, but calling to pay his respects to Lord Fairfax, he there met with Cromwell, who walked up to him, and in the familiar manner which he used towards his friends, he laid his hand on his shoulder and said, 'We must be better acquainted;' to which Owen modestly replied, 'That will be much more to my advantage than yours.' 'We shall soon see that,' said Cromwell, and taking him by the hand immediately led him into Fairfax's garden, where he told him of his intended expedition into Ireland, and requested him

to accompany him for the purpose of regulating the affairs of Trinity College. Owen objected, on account of his charge of the church at Coggeshall; but Cromwell would take no denial, and from entreaties proceeded to commands. He himself wrote to the church at Coggeshall, which was exceedingly averse to part with their beloved pastor; till at length the general told them he must, and should go.

Thus commenced an intimacy, and indeed a close friendship, between these two great men, which lasted, with small interruption, as long as Cromwell lived. The high esteem of Cromwell for Owen was manifested by the attentions which he paid him, and the honours he conferred upon him. And that this friendship was reciprocated by Owen is also evident.—He entertained for him a respect founded on his belief in the private worth, the personal talents, and the public virtues of that extraordinary man. Whether he was mistaken in the character of the man; or whether he judged correctly of one whose name, by his enemies, has been loaded with obloquy, this is not the place to discuss. At this time, no doubt, appearances was much more in favour of Cromwell, than after his exaltation to the supreme power of the commonwealth. It is, therefore, no how surprising, that he should have gained the esteem of Owen. If there be any difficulty in the case, it is, that this friendship should

have continued so long, notwithstanding the glaring inconsistencies with which the character of the Protector was marked. Undoubtedly he did much to promote the glory of his country, was uniformly the friend of religious freedom; and if not a religious man himself—on which we would express no opinion—he extended protection to religious men, of every denomination, and selected for his friends and advisers some of the best men whom the country possessed.

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### CHAPTER III.

ON the 7th of June, 1649, the city of London gave a grand entertainment, in Grocer's Hall, to the general, officers of state, and the House of Commons, to which they repaired in great pomp, after hearing two sermons, the one from Thomas Goodwin, the other from John Owen. The subject of Owen's sermon, on this occasion, was, "Human power defeated." In a note, it is said to have had reference to the defeat of the Levellers, at Burford, on the 18th of the preceding month. This was a fanatical sect, of desperate characters who openly opposed themselves to all civil government, as well as to the ministry, and to all divine ordi-

nances. About four thousand of these assembled at Burford, under the command of a leader, whose name was Thomson, once condemned for sedition, but who had been pardoned by Cromwell. They were attacked when unprepared, first by Col. Reynolds, and then by Fairfax and Cromwell, who took four hundred of them prisoners, and scattered the remainder.

On the 2d of July, Owen received his commission to go to Ireland, as chaplain to Lieutenant-General Cromwell, and £100, per annum, was ordered to be paid for the subsistence of his wife and children, while he was absent. He sailed, with the army, which consisted of fourteen thousand men, from Milford Haven, about the middle of August. A day of fasting and prayer was observed previously to embarking, on which occasion, after some of the ministers had prayed, Cromwell himself, together with Colonels Gough and Harrison, expounded some parts of Scripture, suited to the circumstances in which they were placed. It may be conjectured that the army whose commanding officers set such an example, would be very different from most bodies assembled for war; accordingly, it is related of them, that not an oath was to be heard throughout the whole camp, and their discipline was most exact. The soldiers spent their leisure time in reading their Bibles, singing psalms, and in religious conferences. While this

army was formidable in the field, it committed no lawless ravages on the inhabitants, either as to their persons or property. They were, therefore, when compared with the turbulence and tumultuousness of the king's troops, saluted as friends, and treated as guests. And this fact does not depend merely on the testimony of friends, but distinguished men, on the other side, have given the same. "I observed," says Chillingworth, "a great deal of piety in the commanders and soldiers of the Parliament's army. I confess their discourse and behaviour do speak them Christians; but I can find little of God or godliness in our men." Even Lord Clarendon, with all his strong prejudices, acknowledges the same.

Such was the army of Cromwell, which gained all his battles—an army whose sobriety and good order, whose courage and success, made it famous and terrible throughout the world. Such was the army of which Owen was appointed a chaplain; an army which, humanly speaking, could hardly fail to be victorious; for it consisted of a body of warriors, animated not merely with the *amor patriæ*, but with the *amor Dei*, and who fought with more than mortal courage.

When the army arrived at Dublin, Owen took up his residence at Trinity College, as one chief reason assigned by Cromwell for bringing him was, that he might regulate the affairs of this institution. But while here he

was not permitted to be idle: numerous assemblies attended with thirsting desire on his preaching; nor were his labours without fruit. Instances are on record of some excellent persons, who acknowledged that they had received, as they hoped, saving benefit from his ministry. It seems peculiarly proper to notice such cases, because an unfounded story got into circulation, that Owen never knew that he had been instrumental in the conversion of one soul. What he accomplished in regulating the college cannot now be ascertained, as the records of the university prior to the restoration are no longer extant.

His work on "Redemption," of which an account has been given, was attacked by a much more formidable opponent than Horne; that is, by no less a person than Richard Baxter. The title of the work of this great man, in which he animadverted on Owen's treatise, was, "Aphorisms on Justification," in an Appendix to which his remarks on this subject were contained. To these observations Owen made a reply, which he wrote while in Dublin; but it was not published until the next year after his return to London. The title of this answer was, "Of the Death of Christ—the price he paid—and the Doctrine concerning these things, formerly delivered in a Treatise against Universal Redemption, vindicated from the exceptions of Mr. R. B." This was the commencement

of a series of disputes and collisions between these two eminent theologians, undoubtedly in the judgment of those who came after them, the most distinguished of their age, and which never ceased until their death. In these Baxter was, notwithstanding his fervent declamations for peace, always the aggressor: Owen never meddled with him, except in self-defence. Baxter was, no doubt, a man of eminent piety, inextinguishable zeal, and indefatigable industry; but in his efforts to reconcile conflicting opinions, and to harmonize contending spirits, he often enkindled the flames of contention, and made the breach wider than he found it. It can hardly be supposed that he was actuated by any jealousy of Owen, on account of his pre-eminent talents and learning. Baxter had too much piety to suffer himself to be actuated by motives so low and selfish. The truth of the matter we presume was, that the reason why Owen was made the object of attack was, that he stood at the head of his party, and held opinions, both as to church government and doctrinal theology, widely different from those of Baxter. Mr. Orme, when speaking of Baxter, has the following remarks, which though somewhat severe, are nevertheless just: "Pure in his intentions, but often injudicious in his measures, his labours frequently produce only disappointment and trouble. He was the most metaphysical man of his age, constantly em-

ploying himself in making distinctions where there was no difference, or in attempting to show that the most opposite opinions admitted of the same explanation. A professed enemy to controversy, yet perpetually engaged in it; he multiplied disputes by endeavouring to destroy them. He was neither a Calvinist nor an Arminian, and yet, at times, was claimed by both. He was neither a churchman nor a dissenter, but sometimes wrote against the one, and sometimes against the other, till all parties might quote him as an advocate, and meet him as an enemy. To no man, perhaps, were the words of the heathen satirist more applicable, '*Tenet insanabile vulnus scribendi cacoethes.*' He was of nearly the same standing as Owen; inferior to him in learning, but his equal in acuteness, patience of research, and in the abundance of his labours."

It is much to be regretted, that the discussions of these distinguished theologians were conducted with so much asperity, and so little appearance of mutual kindness. Even where their differences were merely verbal, they are characterized by too much keenness. To Owen's reply Baxter published a rejoinder, in his "Confession of Faith," published in 1655, in which he endeavours to fasten on Owen the charge of ANTINOMIANISM. To this Owen replied at the end of his "*VINDICIÆ EVANGELICÆ*," vindicating his former sentiments, and complaining of the



injustice of Baxter, who made it a point always, if possible, to have the last word, and who came out again in his "Five Disputations on the Sacraments," in which he continues to introduce his controversy with Owen. So interminable, at times, are the disputes of polemic theologians. Baxter, however, afterwards acknowledged that he had too rashly meddled with Owen, and that he was then too raw to handle such controversies.

Immediately after Owen's return from Ireland, he was again called to preach before parliament on a day of solemn humiliation throughout the kingdom: this was on February 28, 1650. This discourse, entitled "The steadfastness of promises, and the sinfulness of staggering," indicates the warm interest which the preacher felt in the spiritual welfare of Ireland, and the deep sense which he entertained of the desolate condition of that country, as it related to the means of grace. "I would," says he, "there were for the present one gospel preacher for every walled town in the English possessions in Ireland. The land mourneth, and the people perish for want of knowledge. Many run to and fro, but it is on other designs—knowledge is not increased. They are sensible of their wants, and cry out for a supply. The tears and cries of the inhabitants of Dublin, after the manifestation of Christ, are ever in my view. If they were in the dark, and loved to have it

so, it might, in some respects, close the door upon the bowels of our compassion; but they cry out of their darkness, and are ready to follow any one who has a candle. If their being without the gospel move not our hearts, it is hoped their importunate cries will disquiet our rest, and extort help, as a beggar doth alms."

This touching appeal in behalf of Ireland was not without its effect, as parliament soon after passed an act for the encouragement of learning and religion in Ireland. And it is highly to the credit of this parliament that they were constantly attentive to representations made to them of the destitution of the gospel, in any part of the country, and took measures to have them supplied, which can no otherwise be accounted for than by supposing that a religious influence predominated in that body.

Cromwell's attachment to Owen, and desire to have him with him, was no how diminished by the trial which he had of him in Ireland; for being now ordered to Scotland, he had it arranged that Owen, with Joseph Caryl, should accompany him. The invasion of Scotland was owing to the declared hostility of the Scots to the commonwealth, and their avowed adherence to Charles II. Cromwell published a proclamation, to "all the saints and partakers of the faith of God's elect, in Scotland," in which the proceedings of the English parlia-

ment are vindicated. But he did not trust to proclamations, but marched with rapid speed into the country, and decided its fate by a single battle, at Dunbar.

Owen, in obedience to the orders of parliament, joined him at Berwick; for it cannot be conceived that this manner of life was congenial, either to his habits or to his inclinations.

Although he agreed with the church of Scotland very perfectly in his theological creed, yet the party with which he was connected, both in their civil and ecclesiastical polity, were held in great abhorrence by the ministers and people of Scotland. During his journey to Scotland, Owen preached two sermons from Isaiah lvi. 7, "For my house shall be called a house of prayer for all people," which may be found in the fifteenth volume of his works. In a dedication of them to Cromwell, he declares "that it was with thoughts of peace he embraced his call to this place, in time of war"—"that his chief design in complying with it was, to pour out a savour of the gospel on the sons of peace in Scotland; that he hoped this had been manifested in the consciences of all with whom he had had to do in the work of the ministry; and that though some were so seasoned with the leaven of contention about carnal things, as to disrelish the weightier things of the gospel, yet the great owner of the living seed had not left him without a

comfortable evidence that his labours in the Lord had not been in vain." These discourses are entitled "The Branch of the Lord, the Beauty of Zion."

The English army took possession of Edinburgh, but how long Owen remained there is uncertain. The ministers accompanying the army took possession of the pulpits, and the people heard them with wonder and suspicion; but the Scottish ministers having remained in the castle, Cromwell let them know that they might all return to their charges, and pursue their vocation without molestation.

In Glasgow a curious discussion took place between Owen and some of the Scottish ministers, in the presence of Cromwell. At this meeting, Hugh Binning so managed the dispute, that he nonplused Cromwell's ministers, which led Oliver to ask, after the meeting was over, who that learned and bold young man was; and upon being told that it was *Binning*, he answered, "he hath *bound* well," but laying his hand on his sword, "this shall loose all again." The impression which the English ministers received of the general state of religion in Scotland, was far from being favourable, and the same is confirmed by the most reputable of the Scottish writers, as Binning, Rutherford, Baillie, &c.

## CHAPTER IV.

OWEN continued with the army, in Scotland, until early in 1651, when he obtained permission to return to his family and his flock at Coggeshall. But he was not suffered to remain long in this retirement. An order had, a year before, passed the House of Commons, that Goodwin and Owen should be preferred to be heads of colleges, and now Goodwin was appointed president of Magdalen College, and Owen made dean of Christ's Church. This station he was preferred to in the place of Dr. Reynolds, whom the Presbyterians had put into it; but refusing to take the oath to be true to the government without king or House of Lords, he was deprived, and the place given to Owen.

Soon after his appointment, he received a letter from the principal students of Christ's Church, expressing their great satisfaction at his appointment, and their great desire that he would come among them. Accordingly, he resigned his pastoral office and took up his residence at Oxford, in the course of the same year.

Christ Church is one of the best foundations in Oxford. It remains a standing monument of the large and ambitious views of Cardinal Wolsey, its founder. It consists of a dean, eight canons, eight chaplains, and

one hundred students, with inferior officers. The office of the dean is, to preside at all the meetings of the college, and to deliver divinity lectures. In the hierarchy of the university, he is next in rank to the Bishop of Oxford; and the appointment is in the crown. During the time of the commonwealth, its connexion with the church must have been suspended, but its emoluments were not sequestered, and were very considerable, as they are now.

Owen received this high appointment with his usual modesty and humility. In relation to it, he says, "I now clearly found, that I who dreaded almost every academical employment, as being unequal to the task; and at a time, too, when I had entertained hope, through the goodness of God in giving me leisure, and retirement, and thought for duty, that the deficiency of genius might be made up by industry and diligence, was now so circumstanced that the career of my studies must be interrupted by more and greater impediments than ever. For what could be expected from a man so far advanced in years, and who had been for some time very full of employment, and accustomed only to the popular mode of speaking; and who being entirely devoted to the investigation of the grace of God, through Jesus Christ, had taken leave of all scholastic studies; whose genius is by no means quick, and who had even forgot, in some measure, the portion of

polite learning that he might formerly have acquired? The most weighty and important task of lecturing in public was put upon me, which would strictly and properly require the whole time and attention of the most grave and experienced divine; and in the discharge of which, unless I had been greatly assisted and encouraged by the candour, piety, submission, and self-denial of the auditors, and by their respect for the divine institution, and their love of the truth, with every kind of indulgence to the earthen vessel, I had long lost all hope of discharging that province, either to the public advantage or my own satisfaction and comfort."

How the Independents reconciled it to their principles to receive, without scruple, the revenues of the church which they had overthrown, does not clearly appear: the fact, however, is, that all classes of dissenters accepted places and offices which had been established in connexion with the Episcopal church of England.

Owen as dean of Christ Church, had however, no further connexion with the church than as president of the college; and he was in law and equity entitled to the support attached to his office. This office he never sought, as we have seen, and in another place, he says, "The parliament of England promoted me, while diligently employed in preaching the gospel, by their authority and influence, though with reluctance on my

part, to a chair in the University of Oxford.” Now although full credit is due to the declarations of Owen, from the known probity and disinterestedness of his character; yet it is not easy to defend the inconsistency of Independent ministers accepting such offices. And Milton, at the time, charged it upon them, where he says in his usual energetic style, “that he hated that Independents should take that name, as they justly may from their freedom of Christian doctrine and church discipline, subject to no superior judge but God only—and seek to be *dependents* on the magistrates for their maintenance; which two things, *independence* and *state hire* in religion, can never consist long or certainly together. For magistrates at one time or other, will pay none but such whom by their committees of examination, they find to be conformable to their interests and opinions. And hirelings will soon frame themselves to that interest and those opinions which they see best pleasing to their paymasters; and to seem right themselves, will force others as to the truth.”

On the 24th of October, 1651, Owen was called to preach a thanksgiving sermon, before parliament, on account of the destruction of the Scottish army at Worcester. This celebrated victory, called, “the crowning mercy” of Cromwell, completed the ruin of Charles II. and fully established the authority of the commonwealth, in the three king-



doms. The sermon preached on this occasion, is entitled, "The Advantage of the Kingdom of Christ in the shaking of the Kingdoms of the World," and may be found among his remains in the fifteenth volume of his works. It contains many bold and eloquent passages, especially, in relation to the danger of human governments interfering with the principles and rights of the kingdom of Christ; and on the abomination and extent of the Christian apostasy. "He that thinks," says the preacher, "that Babylon is confined to Rome and its open idolatry, knows nothing of Babylon, nor of the New Jerusalem. The depth of a subtile mystery does not lie in gross, visible folly. It has been insinuating itself into all the nations for sixteen hundred years, and to most of them, is now become as the marrow of their bones. Before it be wholly shaken out, these heavens (ecclesiastical powers) must be dissolved, and this earth (civil governments) shaken; their tall trees hewed down and set a howling, and the residue of them transplanted from one end of the earth to another."

Henry Ireton, son-in-law of Cromwell, having died this year, in Ireland, his remains were transported to London, and Owen was selected to preach his funeral sermon. The title which he gave the sermon was, "The labouring Saint's Dismission to his Rest." Various opinions have been entertained re-

specting this republican leader. Owen, in the close of his sermon, says, "I desire, that in courage and permanency of business, in ability for wisdom and counsel, in faithfulness to his trust and in his trust, in indefatigable industry in the work committed to him, in faith on the promises of God, and acquaintance with his mind in his mighty works of providence, in love to the Lord Jesus and all his saints, in a tender regard to their interest, delight in their society, contempt of himself and all his, for the gospel's sake, with eminent self-denial in all his concerns, in impartiality and sincerity in the execution of justice—that in these, and the like things, we may have many raised up in the power and spirit wherein he walked before the Lord, and the inhabitants of this nation." Ludlow gives a highly honourable testimony to Ireton's character; and even Heath, while he sneers at his piety, exhibits him as a man distinguished for his religion; for he says, "He was absolutely the best prayer-maker, and preacher, in the army."

It is evident, that Owen was the favourite preacher of the parliament, for in October of this year, he was again called to preach before that body, on a day of solemn humiliation. This sermon is entitled, "Christ's Kingdom and the Magistrate's Power;" in one passage of which, the preacher gives a striking picture of the chaotic state of religion, at this time. "What now by the lust

of men is the state of things? say some, there is no gospel at all; say others, if there be, you have nothing to do with it. Some say, lo, here is Christ; others, lo there. Some make religion a colour for one thing, others for another; say some, the magistrate must not support the gospel; say others, the gospel must subvert the magistrate. Some say, your rule is only for men as men, you have nothing to do with the interest of Christ and his church; others say, you have nothing to do to rule men, only on account of their being saints. If you will have the gospel, say some, down with the ministers of it; and if you will have light, take care that you may have ignorance and darkness."

Nothing can be more unreasonable, than as has been done, to charge Owen with being the cause and leader of this confusion, which he so pithily describes. No man ever had a more correct opinion of the necessity of order; and neither his sentiments nor conduct had a tendency to promote confusion.

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## CHAPTER V.

It will be convenient to exhibit a view of Owen in the important office of Vice-chancellor of the University of Oxford, and then to

speak of his written publications during the same period in a separate chapter.

Cromwell had been chosen Chancellor in January 1651, but being absent, he deputed the dean of Christ's Church, and others to act for him. And by letters, dated September 1652, he nominated Owen to be Vice-chancellor, in the room of Dr. Daniel Greenwood; and on the 26th of the same month, he was elected by the unanimous suffrage of the senate, notwithstanding his urgent request to the contrary. He declares that he only accepted this office, at the earnest solicitation and commands of the leading men of the university, and of the state, and says, that by so doing, he had knowingly sacrificed his peace, and all his studious pursuits."

In the year 1653, we again find him, together with Mr. Cradock, preaching before parliament, on occasion of the thanksgiving for the defeat of the Dutch fleet, commanded by Van Tromp and De Witt. The British fleet was under General Monke. Twenty-six sail of the enemy were destroyed, which event accelerated a peace with Holland, and gave great celebrity to the arms of the commonwealth.

In October, 1653, Owen was called up to London to attend a meeting of ministers, of various denominations, to consider their differences, and consult concerning the practicability of some plan of union.

The account given of this meeting in the

public prints is somewhat remarkable: "Several ministers were treated with by his excellency, the Lord General Cromwell, to persuade them that hold Christ the head and the same fundamentals, to agree in love, that there be no such divisions among people professing godliness as hath been, nor railing, nor reviling each other, for difference of forms only. There were Mr. Owen, Mr. Marshall, (Presbyterian;) Mr. Nye, (Independent;) Mr. Jessey, (Baptist;) Mr. Harrison, and others, to whom the advice and counsel of his excellency was so sweet, so precious, and managed with such judgment and graciousness, that it is hoped it will much tend to persuade those that fear the Lord in spirit and in truth, to labour for the union of all God's people."

This proposal for union, as might have been expected, resulted in nothing. Differences in religion are not likely to be healed by the interference of the civil magistrate, or political management. The true way to effect this is, to leave men to perfect freedom of inquiry, and to teach them to reverence the authority of the word of God, as paramount and exclusive.

While Owen was absent, in London, the university conferred on him the degree of Doctor of Divinity, which, if a suitable title for any, belonged peculiarly to him, who, perhaps, has never been exceeded in profound theological views, by any uninspired

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man. His friend, Thomas Goodwin, received his degree at the same time. Many of the reformers were greatly opposed to the custom of conferring this degree, and refused to receive it. Carlostadt's positive refusal may be passed over, as he was undoubtedly actuated by a fanatical spirit; but Zuinglius abhorred the title. Grynæus, Seb. Munster, and Myconius, would never consent to assume it; and the latter offered to resign his professorship rather than submit to it. Melancthon also refused it; so did Oporinus; but Luther, as far as appears, did not object to it. As the matter stands now, the degree of Doctor of Divinity, is of real utility to no one, and is a real inconvenience to some on whom it is conferred. If, in all cases, the consent of the individual were obtained before it is granted, there would be less ground of complaint; but the public refusal of the degree, when it has been publicly announced, is attended with more inconvenience than to wear it; therefore many who do not wish it, and would refuse it, if they quietly could, as the least of two evils, choose to submit to be addressed by this title; for indeed, in some cases, they could not avoid this by any course which they could pursue. If the title had been confined to professors in universities, and to distinguished writers, it would have been well; but at present it seems to be an evil without a remedy, unless the bodies who take upon them to confer it should



agree to cease giving it to any one; but this would not regulate the proceedings of foreign universities.

Owen, who, in the midst of his greatness, was a truly modest and humble man, submitted with great reluctance to this honour. And in reply to one who reproached him with being offended, if he was not addressed by this title, he says, "And as for the title of *Doctor*, it was conferred on me by the university in my *absence*, and against my *consent*; as they have expressed it under their public seal: nor doth any thing but gratitude and respect for them, make me once own it; and, freed from that obligation, I should never use it more. Nor did I use it, until some were offended with me, and blamed me for my neglect of them."

In the following year, (1654,) Cromwell having dissolved the long parliament, found it expedient to call another. Owen was chosen for the University of Oxford, on the 27th of June. The parliament met on the 3d of September following; but the validity of his election being called in question, on account of his ministerial character, he sat only for a short time. Cawdry, his bitter opponent, charges him with refusing to answer, whether he was a minister or not; which he said, he gathered from public rumour. Wood, no less hostile, improves upon the story, and asserts, that rather than be set aside, because he was a theologian, he

Baxter. After several meetings, they at last reported sixteen articles, in a paper, entitled, "The principles of faith, presented by Messrs. Goodwin, Nye, Simpson, and other ministers, to the committee of parliament for religion."

Baxter, in his "Life," gives a tiresome account of this meeting, and ascribes the whole work to Owen, assisted by Goodwin, Nye, and Simpson. He informs us that there was a great deal of wrangling, of which, by his own account, he was the principal cause. The account given by Neal, of the object of this meeting, is not correct. He seems to think that they were appointed to advise the parliament how far they might proceed, in granting liberty of conscience; whereas, their sole business was to say, what, in their opinion, was fundamental in Christianity. All the remarks, therefore, which he has made on the subject, are irrelevant.

In the end of the year 1653, Owen, Goodwin, Caryl, Lockyer, and others, were presented to parliament, to be sent commissioners, in committees of three, for ejecting and settling ministers, according to the rules then prescribed; but the project not taking effect, commissioners for the approbation of public preachers were appointed, of whom Owen was one. And in 1654, he was on the commission for ejecting scandalous, incompetent, and ignorant ministers. He was, about the same time, appointed one of the visitors, for

the regulation of the University of Oxford, and for the promotion of the interests of learning in it. These various appointments must have greatly increased his labours, and exposed him to the censures and attacks of his vigilant enemies. The *Tryers*, as they were called, were thirty-eight in number, and consisted of Independents, Presbyterians, and Baptists. They were directed to inquire, particularly, "into the grace of God in the candidate, his holy and unblameable conversation, also into his knowledge and utterance, and fitness to preach the gospel." The conduct of the Tryers has been the subject of much animadversion. Neal exclaims against their arbitrary proceedings, and yet when he comes to detail their proceedings, it amounts almost to a complete vindication. They had a difficult task to perform, and probably executed it as wisely and impartially, as most other men, in similar circumstances, would have done; yet it cannot be denied, that the commissioners for the several counties, were frequently men of narrow, bigoted minds, and exercised their power against men of real merit for learning and good character. We have an example, in the case of Dr. Pococke; and as it will serve to exhibit the liberality and justice of Owen's sentiments, we will mention it.

This eminent oriental scholar and professor of Arabic in Oxford, was brought before the commissioners for Berks, on account of a

living he had there, and was likely to receive hard measure from them. Owen, understanding how the matter stood, wrote to the secretary, Thurloe, as follows: "There are in Berkshire some men of mean quality and condition, who are the commissioners for ejecting ministers. They alone sit, and act, and are at this time casting out, on slight pretences, very worthy men; one especially they intend to eject next week, whose name is Pococke, a man of as unblameable conversation as any I know living; of repute for learning throughout the world, being the professor of Arabic in our university. So that they do exceedingly exasperate all men, and provoke them to the highest. If any thing could be done to cause them to suspend acting till this storm be over, I cannot but think it would be good service to his highness and the commonwealth." Not satisfied with writing, Owen, accompanied by Drs. Ward, Wilkins, and Wallis, repaired to the spot where the commissioners met, where they all laboured with much earnestness to convince them of the strange absurdity of their conduct. Dr. Owen, in particular, with some warmth endeavoured to make them sensible of the infinite contempt and reproach which would certainly fall on them, when it should be known that they had turned out a man for *insufficiency*, whom all the learned, not of England only, but of all Europe, so justly admired for his vast

knowledge and extraordinary accomplishments. But being himself one of the commissioners, he added, that he was now come to deliver himself from a share in such disgrace, by protesting against a course so strangely foolish and unjust. The commissioners were so exceedingly mortified to find their conduct disapproved by so many eminent men, and especially by Owen, in whom they had great confidence, that they stopped the proceedings, and dismissed Pococke from his attendance. Still, however, the commissioners did much good. Baxter, who was not one of them, nor a friend to their proceedings, acknowledges "that they saved many a congregation from ignorant, ungodly, and drunken teachers—that sort of ministers that intend no more than to say a sermon, as readers say their common prayers, and so patch a few good words together to talk the people asleep on Sunday; and all the rest of the week to go with them to the ale-house, and harden them in their sin; and from that sort of ministers that either preached against a holy life, or preached as men that never were acquainted with it; all such as used the ministry as a common trade to live by, and were never likely to convert a soul—all these they usually rejected, and in their stead admitted such as were able, serious preachers, and lived a godly life, of what tolerable opinion soever they were. So that though some of them were somewhat partial to the In-

dependents, Separatists, Fifth Monarchy men, and Anabaptists, and against the Prelatists and Arminians, yet so great was the benefit above the hurt which they brought to the church, that many thousands of souls blessed God for the faithful ministers whom they introduced, and grieved when the Prelatists turned them out again."

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## CHAPTER VI.

IN the year 1655, Cromwell's government had become very unpopular in many parts of the country, and the royalists had concerted to have a general rising on a day appointed. In the west, the dissatisfaction broke out into open opposition, headed by the unfortunate Colonel Penruddock, who was shortly after executed as a traitor. The conspiracy was crushed by the vigilance of the Protector and his friends. On this occasion, Dr. Owen acted with great zeal and energy in support of the existing government. He exerted all his influence to keep the people quiet in his own county, and promoted the raising a troop of horse, by the contributions of the members of the University. This fact is mentioned merely to show the zeal and public spirit of the Vice-chan-

cellor, and his determination to discharge the trust committed to him as the chief resident governor of the University. This conduct, however, furnished to his ever vigilant enemies a fruitful theme of virulent abuse. One of them writes in the following strain:—"When those loyal gentlemen of the west made an attempt to redeem their native soil from the bondage of their Cromwellian taskmasters, how did this Cromwellian doctor, rather like a major-general than a vice-chancellor, carry God in his scabbard and religion at his sword's point? How did he make his beadles exchange their staves for fighting irons. How did he turn his gown into a cloak, and vaunt it with white powder in his hair and black in his pocket, threatening every one with disaffection to the government who would not join with him in his designs. And so he rode up and down like a spiritual Abaddon, breathing out nothing against those brave souls but rage and fury, slaughter and blood." To this tirade the doctor made very little reply. As to wearing a sword, he said that to his remembrance he never wore one in his life.

We find him afterwards corresponding with Cromwell in favour of a person who had distinguished himself in the Penruddock affair, recommending him as a suitable person for a judge.

At the close of this year, Dr. Owen was called to London to attend a conference re-

specting the Jews. It was held in a drawing-room at Whitehall, in the presence of the Protector, who laid before them the proposal of Manasseh Ben Israel, a Spanish Jew, resident in Holland, for permission for his countrymen to settle and trade in England. The meeting consisted of two judges, seven citizens of London, including the Lord Mayor and sheriffs, and fourteen divines, among whom were Dr. Owen, Dr. Goodwin, Dr. Whichcot, Dr. Cudworth, Mr. Bridge, and Mr. Cradock. The judges knew of no law against it; the citizens were divided in opinion, as to the beneficial effect of such a measure on the commerce of the city; but the divines, who were called to consider its religious bearing, were for the most part violently opposed to granting any such indulgence. They argued the point four whole days, until Cromwell became weary, and put an end to the debate by saying, that he had hoped they would cast some light on the subject, but instead of that, they had rendered it more obscure than before. He desired, therefore, no more of their counsels, but begged a share in their prayers. Sir Paul Ricaut, who was then a young man, pressed in among the crowd, and said he never heard a man speak so well in his life as Cromwell did on this occasion. The part which Owen took in the debate is unknown, but judging from his avowed principles respecting toleration, it is probable that he was in favour of



permitting the Jews to settle in England. One argument used by the Protector in favour of this indulgence was, that as the Scriptures clearly predicted the future conversion of the Jews to Christianity, their settlement in England would bring them within the reach of the means of instruction, and where they could hear the preaching of the gospel, free from that idolatry and superstition which stood in the way of their conversion in most other countries. The project, however, failed at this time; but Manasseh received £200 from the public purse for his trouble.

On the 17th of September, 1656, Dr. Owen preached before a new parliament, which the Protector had summoned to confirm his title to the supreme authority. The thanks of the body were presented to him, and the sermon was published as usual, with a dedication to Cromwell. The title of the discourse is, "God's work in founding Zion, and his people's duty thereupon," and it is now contained, with his other sermons, in the fifteenth volume of his works. In it he states his enlightened views of Christian liberty with great precision. Perhaps, even at this day, the true principles of the rights of conscience, and the limits of the civil power in regard to religion, could not be more clearly stated.

We find him again preaching before the parliament on the 30th of the following October, on a day of humiliation. The title of this discourse, for which he also received the

thanks of the house, is, "God's presence with a people, the spring of their prosperity." In this sermon he pleads for the protection of the people of God of all parties; and laments the extremes into which many were disposed to run, in religion. "Some," says he, "are still zealous for the traditions of their fathers, and nothing almost will satisfy them but their old road of beggarly readers, in every parish. Others, again, perhaps out of a good zeal, have hurried the people with violence beyond their principles, and sometimes, it may be, beyond the truth. Between complaints on the one side and the other, between misguided zeal and formality, the whole work almost is cast to the ground; the business of Zion, as such, is scarce by any cared for." He again earnestly directed the attention of Parliament towards Wales; which subject had already engaged their attention. Many ignorant and incompetent ministers had been ejected, and one hundred and fifty evangelical preachers had been planted in the thirteen Welsh counties, most of whom preached three or four times a week. Every market town had been supplied with a schoolmaster, and, when they were large, with two. Six preachers had been appointed to itinerate in each county, who were indefatigable in their labours; so that all things considered, the principality was as well supplied with the means of grace, as any other part of the country similarly situated.

As is usual with all usurpers, Cromwell's thirst for power continued to increase. All his political measures and manœuvres had for their object, the raising himself and family to a permanent possession of the throne of Great Britain. The present parliament had been convened expressly with a view to give their sanction to the scheme, and to consummate his ambitious wishes. Several committees had already reported favourably to such a change, and a time had been fixed when the sense of the whole House was to be taken on the measure. His greatest difficulty did not arise from the numerous loyalists, who believed that Charles II. was the legitimate heir to the crown, for few of these were now in parliament; but from the stern republicans of his own party; and especially from some leading men closely connected with his own family. General Fleetwood, his son-in-law, and Colonel Desborough, his brother-in-law, were fixed in their opposition. When the Protector informed the latter of his intention to have himself declared king, he told him flatly that if he did, he would not act with him any longer. And when Desborough informed Colonel Pride of the design of Cromwell to assume the title of king, he answered peremptorily, "He shall not." "But," said the other, "how will you prevent it?" "Get me a petition drawn up," said he, "and I will blast it." On this they both went to Dr. Owen and informed him

what was going on, and persuaded him to draw up a petition for them. Next morning it was presented to the House by Colonel Mason and some other officers, and set forth, "that they had hazarded their lives against monarchy, and were still ready to do so in defence of the liberties of the nation; that having observed in some men, great endeavours to bring the nation again under the old servitude, by pressing their General to take upon him the authority and title of king, in order to destroy him and weaken the hands of those who were faithful to the republic; they therefore humbly desired they would discountenance all such persons and endeavours, and continue steadfast to the old cause," &c. This petition being signed by most of the officers then in London, involved Cromwell and the parliament in the greatest perplexity. Cromwell was too wily a politician to incur the displeasure and excite the opposition of those who were now opposed to his ambitious schemes; he therefore relinquished his purpose, and instead of getting the parliament to declare him king, he accepted of the pomp and power of the regal office, under the less offensive title of PROTECTOR.

He was, however, not a man readily to forget those who were the cause of his disappointment, and especially Dr. Owen, for the part he took in getting up this petition. Indeed, from this time he became more cool and reserved towards Owen, and he was no

longer called upon, as he had long been, when the government wanted a preacher for any solemn occasion. Accordingly, when the Protector was inaugurated into the office of Protector, Dr. Lockyer was the preacher, and Dr. Manton, a Presbyterian, took part in the solemnities of the day. Neither Owen nor the other leading Independent ministers, were selected to officiate at this mock coronation; and we learn from Owen himself, that for a long time before Cromwell's death, he had never seen him. But the conclusive proof that Owen had lost the favour of the Protector, was, that Cromwell now resigned the office of Chancellor, and his son Richard was appointed his successor, who, in six weeks after, dismissed Owen from the office of Vice-chancellor, and appointed Dr. John Conant, a Presbyterian, in his room.

When Owen was appointed to preside over the University of Oxford, every thing, in consequence of the war, was in a state of confusion and almost ruin. Very little attention had for some time been paid to learning; and as, for a long time, Oxford was the head quarters of the king and his cavaliers, it is not wonderful that dissipation and profaneness should have gained an unusual ascendancy among the students. It required a strong and steady hand to hold the reins of government in these circumstances; but Owen was a man of firm resolution, as well as profound wisdom, and exerted himself to

the utmost to restore discipline and to revive solid learning in the University. The time which he was Vice-chancellor was five years; and he filled the next most important office for four years before he was advanced to be Vice-chancellor. Among the masters of colleges, and professors who were with him in the University, some were highly distinguished, whose praise is in the churches, as able writers, to this day. Without undertaking to mention all of this description, it will not be improper to name Dr. Thomas Goodwin, president of Magdalen College, Thankful Owen, president of St. John's College, who, according to Wood, "had a good command of the Latin tongue," and is described by Calamy as "a man of polite learning and excellent temper; and who was admired for his uncommon fluency, easiness and sweetness in all his compositions." Dr. Owen said of him, at his death, which occurred in 1681, "that he had not left his fellow behind him for learning, religion and good humour."

George Porter, fellow of Magdalen College, was proctor of the University in the second year of Owen's Vice-chancellorship. He was a man of good learning, great gravity, integrity, self-denial, and charity. Stephen Charnock, was fellow of New College, and in 1652, senior proctor. His work on the "Divine Attributes" is a sufficient proof of his talents, piety, and learning. Among the Presbyterians, we may mention

Dr. Henry Wilkinson, senior, Margaret professor of divinity, a man of learning and public spirit, and Dr. Henry Wilkinson, junior, principal of Magdalen Hall, and author of several learned works. Both of these had been members of the Wesminster Assembly of Divines. Dr. Daniel Greenwood was principal of Brazen Nose College, and had been Vice-chancellor: he had the reputation of being a profound scholar and able divine. Dr. Edmund Staunton was president of Corpus Christi College, and was so well acquainted with the Scriptures, that he was a living concordance to the Bible, and was distinguished no less for his amiable manners than for the extent of his learning. Dr. John Conant was rector of Exeter College, and was the successor of Owen in the office of Vice-chancellor. Dr. Robert Harris, president of Trinity College, was a great Hebrew scholar, chronologist, and historian. Dr. Langley was master of Pembroke College, and a solid and judicious divine. Dr. Michael Roberts was said to be a good scholar, and John Harmar, Regius professor of Greek, in the university, was a most excellent philologist.

Among the Episcopalians were Dr. Wilkins, warden of Wadham College, who married the sister of the Protector, and after the restoration was made bishop of Chester; a man justly celebrated for the extent of his philosophical learning, his great abilities, and

amiable temper: Dr. Seth Ward, though a temporizer, yet one of the most celebrated mathematicians and astronomers, of the age, and who was made bishop of Exeter and Salisbury: Dr. Wallis who had been one of the clerks of the Westminster Assembly, Savilian professor of Geometry, and highly celebrated for his attainments in the higher branches of mathematics: Doctor Pococke professor of Arabic, the greatest oriental scholar of his time: Dr. Joshua Hoyle, master of University College and king's professor of divinity: Dr. Thomas Hyde, afterwards professor of Arabic and author of the learned work, "*De Religione Persarum*:" And Mr. Samuel Clark, one of the most learned coadjutors of Walton, in editing the Polyglot. Both Robert Hooke and Robert Boyle, resided in the university, during this period. It may well be doubted, whether Oxford, at any one time, possessed a brighter constellation of truly learned and excellent men, than while Dr. Owen was Vice-chancellor. A contrary report has gone forth from the writers of the high church party, but the names mentioned above are a sufficient refutation of it. And if we had time to give a list of the eminent men who studied in the University, during this period, the same conclusion would be rendered still more evident.

It was during the period of Owen's Vice-chancellorship, that the Royal Society was



founded, and Oxford too, was its birth-place. And if any additional evidence were needed to refute the calumnies heaped upon Owen and his friends, it might be derived from Lord Clarendon himself, who says, speaking of the University, "It yielded a harvest of extraordinary, good, and sound knowledge, in all parts of learning; so that when it pleased God to bring Charles II. back to his throne, he found that university abounding in excellent learning, and little inferior to what it was before its desolation."

The conduct of Dr. Owen, while at the head of the University was marked by dignity, impartiality, decision, condescension, and urbanity. Though always firm, yet he was moderate and gentle. His treatment of those who differed from him, was generous and disinterested. Although the Episcopalian worship was not tolerated by law, yet he permitted a society of three hundred of them, who used the liturgy, to meet just opposite to his residence. And in bestowing vacant livings, he showed no partiality to the Independents, but gave most of them to the Presbyterians, whose ministers were most numerous, and with whom the people more generally agreed. Among the students he acted as a father. While he discountenanced and punished the vicious, he rewarded and encouraged the modest and indigent, without the least regard to the party to which they belonged. In his own house, he was

hospitable, generous to poor scholars, some of whom he took into his own family, and others he assisted by donations of money. He was liberal also in his treatment of foreigners, some of whom, by his favour, and that of the canons of Christ Church, were admitted to free commons, and the use of the library. In his own person he gave an example of fidelity and laborious diligence. It had been common for the university sermons, on the afternoon of the Lord's day, to be preached by the fellows, in orders; but this being found not much for edification, he and Dr. Goodwin divided this labour between them. And although St. Mary's church is spacious; yet, whenever the Vice-chancellor preached, it was filled with an attentive congregation.

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## CHAPTER VII.

WE have followed Dr. Owen's progress through the most conspicuous part of his earthly career; but not the most important to posterity. It is in the character of an author, that his life is most interesting to us. As a theologian we cannot name his superior, whether we view him as a defender and expounder of the fundamental doctrines of the Christian religion, or as an experienced and

able casuist, whose intimate knowledge of the temptations, conflicts, consolations, and various exercises of the pious, enabled him to write such treatises on experimental and practical religion as have been, and long will be, a rich treasure to the churches, where the English language is understood.

While Vice-chancellor of Oxford, it might have been thought, that Dr. Owen would have found no time for writing books; yet the fact is, that during this period, some of his most valuable works were composed; of which some account will now be given.

The first which claims our attention is, a Latin dissertation on Divine Justice, "*Diatriba de Divina Justitia*," or, the "*Claims of Vindictory Justice Asserted*," published in 1653. It was occasioned, as the author informs us, by one of the public disputations in the University, in which it fell to his lot to show, that on the supposition of the existence of sin, it was necessary that the vindictory justice of God should be exercised. Although the Socinians were chiefly in the author's view, yet it is understood that many in the University entertained different views from those here expressed, and there had been considerable discussion of this matter before the publication of this treatise.

Being a university exercise, it is scholastic and profound, but it contains a thorough discussion of the subject, which every intelligent reader may easily understand. The

whole controversy may be reduced to a single point, namely, "Whether God, as a moral governor, could forgive sin without an atonement, or such a provision for the honour of his justice as that which is made by the sacrifice of Christ." On this point the orthodox were by no means agreed; for Dr. Twisse, the prolocutor of the Westminster Assembly, and Mr. Samuel Rutherford, a learned professor of Scotland, had, in their theological works, maintained the affirmative; and Owen himself, in the earlier part of his ministry, had been of the same opinion, but on more mature consideration, he changed his mind, and maintained the negative in this treatise with arguments which never can be answered. And this doctrine is radical in the system of revealed truth, for on the supposition that sin could be pardoned without an adequate satisfaction to divine justice, the necessity of the atonement, and of Christ's incarnation never can be clearly demonstrated; and consequently both the wisdom and grace of God, as manifested in the plan of redemption, will be obscured. An English translation of this treatise was published by Mr. Hamilton, in 1789, recommended in a preface, by Drs. Stafford and Simpson, and Mr. Ryland, sen. "It will be granted," say they, "by all competent judges, that the author discovers an uncommon acquaintance with his subject; that he has clearly explained the nature of divine jus-

tice, and demonstrated it to be not merely an arbitrary thing, depending on the sovereign pleasure of the supreme Lawgiver, but essential to the divine nature." It was judicious in the editor of the late edition of Dr. Owen's works, to publish the translation rather than the original; for Owen's Latin style is not very easy and perspicuous, but often crabbed and obscure. The translation is said to be, on the whole, well executed, except that it is too literal, which is a fault on the right side, where the exact sentiments of the original are desiderated.

The next work which Dr. Owen produced is in English, and is an elaborate performance. Its title is, "The Doctrine of the Saint's Perseverance Explained and Confirmed," &c. This was professedly an answer to that part of the work of John Goodwin, entitled "Redemption Redeemed," which treats of this subject. This work, as the former, was dedicated to Oliver Cromwell, and also to the heads of colleges in the universities. The preface, which contains a history of the doctrine in question, especially since the rise of Arminianism in Holland, fills forty folio pages, and is exceedingly learned; but the style is so rugged and involved, that it requires no small share of patience to labour through it.

John Goodwin, the author whom he opposes, was one of the most extraordinary men of the age. He was an Arminian and

a republican; a man of violence both in politics and religion; and whose controversial powers were of the highest order. His style was vehement, declamatory, figurative, and very fluent. His arguments plausible and imposing, but more showy than solid. His "Redemption Redeemed" is in fact an Arminian system of divinity, in which its peculiar tenets are as clearly exhibited and as ably defended as by any author since he wrote. Like most Arminian writers, however, he caricatures Calvinism, in order to expose it to the dislike of his readers. Owen undertook to answer this work, only on one point, the "Saint's Perseverance," but this includes the principles of the whole controversy; for all the five points are closely linked to one another, and must stand or fall together. This work contains an accurate statement and masterly defence of the doctrine in question. Every scriptural argument is judiciously brought forward, and nothing omitted which is important to the support of the doctrine. Although the style is keen and forcible, yet there is not much that may be called acrimonious. The objections to the doctrine are solidly and satisfactorily answered. The plan of the whole work, or the topics of argument, are given succinctly in the title page as follows: "The Doctrine of the Saint's Perseverance Explained and Confirmed; or, the certain permanency of their acceptation with God, and sanctification from

God, manifested and proved, from the eternal principles, the effectual causes, and the external means thereof; in the immutability of the nature, decrees, covenant, and promises of God; the oblation and intercession of Jesus Christ; the promises, exhortations, and threatenings of the gospel, improved in its genuine tendency to obedience and consolation; and vindicated in a full answer to the discourse of Mr. John Goodwin against it, entitled 'Redemption Redeemed,' with some digressions concerning the immediate effects of the death of Christ, personal indwelling of the Spirit, union with Christ, the nature of gospel promises," &c.

It is somewhat unaccountable, that while most of Dr. Owen's theological writings have been republished and abridged, this important treatise has remained buried in the original folio edition, in which it was first given to the public, until the late edition of the whole of the author's works. But it would be doing a real service to the cause of truth, if some capable person would revise and abridge this able work, and publish it in a separate volume; and this seems to be especially called for, because a new and elegant edition of Goodwin's work, against which it was written, has been published in London, and imported into this country by booksellers, who knowing nothing of John Goodwin, the Arminian, supposed that they were supplying the religious public with a treatise from the

pen of the highly Calvinistic Dr. Thomas Goodwin. Other answers to the work of John Owen were published, one by Dr. George Kendall, and another by a zealous and popular Baptist minister, Mr. Thomas Lamb.

Owen had not completed his work on "Perseverance," before he was involved in another controversy with a man as remarkable in many respects as John Owen. This was John Biddle, the genuine father of the English Antitrinitarians, who was educated at Oxford, and had then the character of a good scholar. In 1641, he was elected master of a free school in Gloucester, where he soon began to intimate his doubts respecting the doctrine of the Trinity. He circulated a small manuscript containing twelve arguments against the doctrine of the divinity of the Holy Spirit, which led to his imprisonment. After obtaining his liberty, he was again arrested, and brought before parliament, and by its orders detained in custody for five years. While in prison, he published a "Confession of Faith," concerning the Holy Trinity. This was in 1648. This publication put his life in jeopardy, for a law had been passed by the long parliament, by which the person denying, in words or writing, the being of a God, the Deity of the Son or Holy Spirit, the distinction of the two natures in Christ, or the atonement, and being convicted of the same, should *suffer death*, if he did not abjure his error.



Biddle did not remain unanswered. Among others, Matthew Poole, and Dr. Cheynel wrote against him; but the man not only persevered in holding his heretical opinions, but continued to publish them. He wrote two catechisms, the one called "A Scripture Catechism;" the other, "A Catechism for Children." For this last, he was again brought before parliament, his books condemned to be burned, and himself once more committed to prison. And it is believed that greater extremities would have ensued, had not the Protector sent him out of the way. This unfortunate man died at last in prison, after the restoration. Biddle was a man of learning, and of a strong, independent mind; and by the persecution which he endured, as well as by his abilities, attracted attention to a creed little known in England before his time.

The writings of Biddle called forth the exertions of some of the learned theologians on the continent. Cloppenburg, Nicholas Arnold, and Maresius wrote against him. But the council of state, conceiving that some more complete exposure of Socinianism was required, laid their commands on Dr. Owen, to undertake the important task. This work he entered upon with alacrity, so that in the course of the ensuing year, he produced a quarto volume of seven hundred pages, replete with profound erudition, entitled, "*Vindiciae Evangelicae*," or, "The

Mystery of the Gospel Vindicated, and Socinianism examined, in the confutation of a Catechism, called, 'The Scripture Catechism,' written by John Biddle, M. A." This work came out in 1655, and was dedicated to the Council of State, at whose request it was written. The preface fills no less than seventy pages, addressed to all "who labour in word and doctrine, in Great Britain." In this he gives a learned account of the progress of Antitrinitarianism; especially since the Reformation. It is replete with interesting information, respecting the first founders of this sect, which is not very favourable to their character. After this historical preface, we have an examination of Biddle's preface, which occupies forty-four pages more.

In the body of the work, the Doctor does not confine his attention to Biddle's Catechism, but takes a wide range, and attacks the writings of the Polish brethren, who had done much to maintain and propagate this system of error. He also animadverts on the "Annotations of Grotius," which he considered, as favouring the Socinian heresy. This work is divided into thirty-five chapters, in which he treats, at great length, and with great accuracy and ability, every point of the Socinian controversy. Their sentiments respecting the Scriptures; the Divine nature and character; the original and present condition of man; the person, character, and undertaking of Christ; the doctrines

of grace, election, and perfect obedience; the resurrection of the dead, and the future condition of the wicked, &c. all undergo the fullest, and most rigid scrutiny, and are proved to be very contrary to what is taught in Scripture, as well as subversive of the foundations of Christianity.

This polemical work, though so little read by modern theologians, is among the most complete in this department of theology; and considering the engagements and situation of the author, and the short time in which it was composed, furnishes a memorable proof of his powerful intellect and industrious habits. It is the first work too, in English, in which the Socinian system is fully examined and fairly overthrown, on Scripture principles.

Dr. Owen had a sagacity which enabled him to foresee, that many speculations which were then common, respecting free-will, universal redemption, apostasy from grace, &c. tended directly to Socinianism. And this has, since his day, been verified in numerous cases, both of individuals and whole denominations, not only in England, but in other countries.

He was far from that false charity which leads some to compliment heretics, as a branch of the Christian church. He paid no regard to the greatest human names, when the glory of his master, and the salvation of souls, were at stake; but at the same time,

he shows, that the object of his hostility was the sentiments, not the persons of those against whom he wrote. He gives us one general rule for conducting religious controversy, which is so important and so frequently forgotten, that it deserves to be transcribed, and pondered by all who enter the field of polemics. "That direction," says he, "which with me is *instar omnium*, is a diligent endeavour, to have the power of the truth contended for, abiding on our hearts, that we may not contend for notions, but what we have a practical acquaintance with in our own souls. When the heart is cast into the mould of the doctrine which the mind embraceth; when the evidence and necessity of the truth abide in us; when, not the sense of the words, but of the things, is in our hearts; when we have communion with God in the truths which we contend for, then shall we be garrisoned by the grace of God against all the assaults of men. Without this, all our contending is to ourselves of no value. What am I the better if I can dispute that Christ is God, but have no sense that he is a God in covenant with my soul? What will it avail me, to evince by testimonies and arguments, that he hath made satisfaction for sin, if through my unbelief the wrath of God abides on me? Will it be any advantage in the issue, to profess and dispute, that God works the conversion of a sinner by the irresistible grace of his

Spirit, if I was never acquainted experimentally with that opposition to the law of God, which is in my own soul by nature, and with the efficacy of the exceeding greatness of the power of God, in quickening, enlightening, and bringing forth the fruits of obedience? It is the power of the truth in the heart alone, that will make us cleave to it, in the hour of temptation." No attempt was ever made to answer this work of Owen; and without presumption, we may say, that it never can be refuted.

Owen's next work was of a very spiritual and practical nature. It was a short treatise "On the mortification of Sin in Believers;" 1656. It surely affords evidence of a large measure of grace, that in a situation so exalted, and incumbered with cares so multifarious, he should have had leisure and inclination to direct his attention to a subject, commonly so little thought of by most, in similar circumstances. To maintain the life of godliness, and the ardour of devotional feeling, amidst the atmosphere of a court, and while surrounded with the perplexing business of a college, are attainments of no ordinary kind. Undoubtedly, he must have made the first business of his life, the cultivation of vital piety; and under this sacred and salutary influence, he engaged in all the duties incumbent on him. "I hope," he says, "I may, in sincerity own, that my heart's desire to God, and the chief object of

my life, in the station in which the good providence of God has placed me, are that mortification [of sin,] and universal holiness may be promoted in my own life, and in that of others, to the glory of God."

This treatise has met with a cordial and universal approbation from all experienced Christians, who have been acquainted with it: perhaps no book on the same subject is comparable to it. It could scarcely be written by any one, not deeply acquainted with the recesses of the human heart, and who had not been deeply and variously exercised with the feelings and conflicts of the pious heart.

About this time, Dr. Owen fell into some controversy with Dr. Hammond, respecting the opinions and writings of Grotius, in relation to the atonement and Divinity of Christ. Not that he openly impugned those fundamental doctrines of Christianity; but because he observed a suspicious silence in regard to them. Grotius had, indeed, in 1617, published a learned and able work against Faustus Socinus, "The Satisfaction, &c.;" but although many things are clearly stated in this treatise, so that it may be read with profit; yet on account of various concessions and liberal statements, some of the friends of truth doubted whether he had really promoted the cause of genuine Christianity by this publication. Crellius, in behalf of the Socinians answered Grotius, and the only reply which

he ever made, was to write a complimentary letter to Crellius: in which he seems disposed to adopt the principles of his antagonist. Essenius, however, answered Crellius, and defended the atonement, but is very sparing of his praises of Grotius. We have seen a defence of this treatise of Grotius, written by another Grotius, who professes to be a nephew or grand nephew of the great jurist; but its merits are very moderate. Owen had also, in the preface to the work on 'Perseverance,' made some observations on the 'Epistles of Ignatius,' in connexion with the Episcopal controversy. Dr. Hammond took up both these subjects, in 1655, in a "Defence of Grotius," and an "Answer to the Dissertations concerning the Epistles of Ignatius." Owen in his "Vindiciæ" goes more fully into the opinions of Grotius, without alleging the evidence against his orthodoxy from his letter to Crellius, and from his death-bed conversation, he brings forward the passages of the deity and atonement of Christ, and as he goes along, notices the exposition which Grotius had given of them, whence it appeared, that there was scarce a passage in the Old Testament, or in the New, which he does not answer, explain away, or contradict, expressly. Against these animadversions, Hammond published another "Defence of Grotius," in 1655, which drew from Owen a quarto pamphlet in 1656, entitled, "A Review of the annotations of Grotious, in refer-

ence to the doctrine of the Deity and satisfaction of Christ." To this Hammond returned an answer, entitled a "Third defence of Grotius, &c." in which he rests his vindication not upon a direct answer to Owen's allegations, but on the sentiments of his work "De Satisfactione."

In the year 1656, died three of the most learned men in the kingdom, viz. John Selden, Thomas Gataker and Archbishop Usher. The writings which each of them produced, are of great value and their memorial should be preserved in the churches, but this is not the place to enter into an account of their lives and labours, which is amply done by those who have expressly written their biography.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

IN the year 1658, the leading men among the Independents, proposed a general meeting, for the purpose of publishing a united declaration of their faith and order. The opinion which Dr. Owen held of the lawfulness and utility of Confessions of Faith, may be gathered from the preface to the same declaration. "The most material and genuine use of such confessions is, that under the



same form of words they express the substance of the same common salvation, or unity of their faith, and accordingly such a transaction is to be looked upon only as a means of expressing their common faith, and no way to be made use of as an imposition upon any. Whatever is of force or constraint, in matters of this kind, causes them to degenerate from the name and nature of *Confessions*, and turns them into *exactions* and *impositions of faith*." Certainly no power on earth, civil or ecclesiastical has any right to impose a creed on any man; conscience is, and by right, ought to be free; and force never did nor can communicate light or faith to any mind. In this point we agree with the Independents.

But when any number of persons are associated in Christian bonds, whether as a single church, or as a united body of such churches, they certainly have a right to declare what they hold to be the essential truths of the gospel: and although they have no right nor power to impose their creed on any persons not connected with them; yet undoubtedly they may require of those who join them an assent to those principles; and a continuance in this belief as long as they remain members of such a society. This cannot be considered as an infringement of that liberty, wherewith Christ has made the conscience free; for none ought to wish to be received into such a church, unless they

agree with its creed ; and no man, when he is a member of a church, and adopts a different creed from that which it professes, has any right to continue in its connexion. These are principles too obvious to need any confirmation or illustration. Creeds and confessions, however, are sometimes intended to be a test of the orthodoxy of candidates for the holy ministry ; and it is reasonable that no one should be admitted to that office, in any church, who is not acquainted with, and who does not cordially adopt the entire system of such church. And all denominations must, and do virtually proceed on this principle, whether they have a written creed or not. For suppose a man who is a Socinian or Pelagian, should offer himself as a candidate for the ministry, in a church which has no written confession, but which holds the doctrine of the Calvinistic system, would they receive him ? And do not such churches examine into the sentiments and orthodoxy of such as wish to join them ? Some may require a confession of more truth and some of less ; but still the principle is the same. There is reference to a creed, which the candidate must adopt. And it cannot surely be unlawful to have such a creed or confession, written and published, that all may know what is believed, and that candidates may know precisely what is required of them. And that members or ministers should be excluded, who

depart from the essential doctrines of the society to which they belong, is a necessary consequence of the principle now stated.

The meeting for the purpose, before mentioned, was held at the Savoy, on the 29th of September, 1658, where about two hundred elders and messengers, from about one hundred churches, convened, and continued their meetings until the 12th day of the following month. Having spent a day in prayer, the first question which was agitated was, whether they should adopt the Westminster Confession, or form a new one of their own. The latter was concluded on, but it was agreed to keep as near the order of the Westminster Confession as possible. The persons appointed to draw up this instrument, were Doctors Owen and Goodwin, Messrs. Nye, Bridge, Caryl, and Greenhill. Every article was discussed and unanimously agreed to, and the whole was then published under the title, "A Declaration of the Faith and order owned and practised in the Congregational Churches in England; agreed upon and consented to by their Elders and Messengers at their meeting at the Savoy, October 12, 1658." The preface is long and said to have been written by Owen, though subscribed by the whole committee.

"The Savoy Declaration" contains the same views of doctrine as the Westminster Confession, except on the subject of church government. It never came into common

use, even among the Independents, as it was gradually superseded by the Westminster formularies, which were already in the hands of the people, and from which this did not differ. The meeting at the Savoy had been projected while Cromwell was living, but before the meeting had taken place; this extraordinary man departed this life. Although a coolness had arisen between him and Owen, the cause of which has already been assigned; yet there is no evidence that Owen ever changed his opinion of the sincerity and piety of the Protector. He seems, to the last, to have entertained a favourable opinion of his motives and design. We shall not attempt to judge of his real character, amidst the conflicting opinions of his admirers and opposers. One thing cannot be denied, that England never assumed so much the garb of strict piety, as during his reign. Religion was the fashion of the court. Prayer and fasting were customary exercises. For many years there was not a play acted in all England. From the prince to the peasant, puritanism, with all its strictness, was exhibited. At the same time, the prevalence of the wildest fanaticism, and of the most extravagant sects and opinions, furnished melancholy evidence, that under the cloak of religious zeal, many abominable evils might exist. But after every deduction, perhaps, there never has been a time in England when more vital piety existed, yet it was a piety not

unmixed with alloy. Enthusiasm tinctured the religion of that day very evidently; and often existed without any mixture of genuine religion, and produced many lamentable effects.

That the piety of thousands at this period, was deeply radicated in the sound principles of Scriptural truth was evinced after the restoration, when they suffered grievous persecution on account of their adherence to the truth.

Another work in which Owen was occasionally engaged, while Vice-chancellor, was "On Communion with God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost." He had first preached the substance of this treatise, and then extended and published it. His object is, to show, that the saints hold communion with God in his manifestations of grace and love to them, and in their returns of gratitude, confidence, and holy joy; and that their communion is distinctly with each of the Divine Persons of the Godhead. It is doubtful whether this separate communion with the several persons of the Trinity can be maintained from Scripture; for to us it seems, that in every spiritual approach to God, the believer has to do with all the Persons at one and the same time. And in directing the inquiring soul to seek a distinct communion with each Person of the Godhead; there seems to be danger of separating what God has inseparably joined together. There is, however, much that is

excellent in this performance. It contains passages, and not a few of them, imbued as fully with the genuine spirit of piety as any thing, of human composition, which we ever read. But to enter into the sweetness and richness of this treatise, it is necessary that the reader should have proceeded beyond the first principles of Christian experience. The experiences to which it relates, belong to the hidden life of the believer. He has joys which the world knows not of, and with which a stranger intermeddles not. "The secret of the Lord is with those who fear him."

Only those, therefore, who are divinely taught will be able to enter into the spirit of this work on Communion, and only such are likely to understand it. The opinion of Orme is judicious, and we will adopt it as our own. "Few perhaps will follow out the Doctor's views to the extent to which he carries them, of distinct fellowship with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The groundwork of this illustration, is indeed, in Scripture, but the same sort of superstructure does not appear to be reared upon it. Too many nice distinctions injure the unity and divine harmony which pervade the system of revealed grace, and ill correspond with that lovely freedom, and unfettered phraseology, which distinguished the inspired writings."

Considering the various and perplexing occupations of the author, at the time when he wrote and preached in Oxford, the sub-

stance of this treatise, it furnishes another convincing evidence of the high state of spirituality, habitually kept up, and his deep penetration into the mysteries of redemption.

About this time also, Owen, in compliance with an urgent and solemn request of a Mr. Beverly of Rowel, wrote his tract on "Schism, the true nature of it discovered and considered in reference to the present differences in religion."

He endeavours to illustrate the subject, altogether in the light of Holy Scripture, and comes to conclusions much the same as those arrived at more recently by the Rev. George Campbell, D. D. of Aberdeen. He endeavours to show, that the apostles use the word to signify "causeless divisions and contentions, among the members of a particular church, contrary to that love, prudence, and forbearance, which ought to be exercised towards one another." In order that one may be guilty of the sin of schism, he shows, "that he must be the member of some Christian church, constituted by Jesus Christ; and that in it he raises causeless differences with others, to the interruption of Christian love, and to the disturbance of the due performance of the duties required in the church of God." Hence it follows, that the separation of one church, or of many churches, on account of what affects his conscience, is never described as schism in Scripture; especially, if the body seceded from is not in con-

stitution of divine appointment; and that the separation of an individual from a church on account of what affects his conscience, is not the sin of schism. This treatise, though not directed against any particular body, did not escape animadversion. Dr. Hammond, in his last "Defence of Grotius," makes some remarks on it, as it has a bearing on episcopacy, to which Owen never returned any answer. Giles Firmin published a work, in which he enters on a friendly consideration of Dr. Owen's notions of schism. The book is written in a truly Christian spirit. The object of the author is to show, that schism may be an evil of a much more extensive nature than Dr. Owen makes it. He defines it to be, "a dissolution of that unity which Christ requires in his church," and which may extend to the whole visible profession of Christianity. The difference between them, however, does not appear to be great. Dr. Owen, in answer said, rather uncourteously, that Mr. Firmin neither understood him, nor the things which he wrote about. Firmin was, however, a very respectable man, an eminent scholar, especially in the oriental languages; well read in the Fathers, Church History, and religious controversies.

But Cawdry was the most violent opposer of Owen. His pamphlet was entitled, "Independency a great schism." The first sentence may serve as a specimen of the style



and spirit of the performance: "The crime of schism is so heinous in itself, and so dangerous and noxious to the cause of God, that no invectives against it can well be too great or high."

This writer, in speaking of toleration, uses this language, "Reaping with lamentation the cursed fruits of toleration and forbearance in religion:" and represents toleration "as doing more towards the rooting religion out of the hearts of men in seven years, than the enforcing of uniformity did in seventy." He therefore, generally, terms it "A cursed, intolerable toleration." He had it in view, in this pamphlet, not only to animadvert on Dr. Owen's treatise on schism, but to show his inconsistency and inconstancy, by comparing some things which he had published when connected with the Presbyterians, with what is contained in this treatise on schism. Dr. Owen was not slow in replying. In the course of a few weeks, he produced a "Review of the true nature of schism, with a vindication of the Congregational churches in England from the imputation thereof, unjustly charged upon them by Mr. Daniel Cawdry; printed at Oxford, 1657." This work of one hundred and eighty-one pages, the author assures us was written in four or five days, which he says was all the time that he could devote to it, and all that it deserved. He expresses much surprise to find such a spirit of bitterness among the

Presbyterians; for "in the constant intercourse he had had with Presbyterians, both Scotch and English, he had found them utterly of another spirit; so that, until he saw this treatise, he did not believe that there had remained one godly person in England, of such dispositions in reference to present differences."

The controversy did not terminate here. The next year Cawdry returned to the charge, in a piece entitled, "Independency further proved to be a schism." This also abounds with personal invective, as did the former. This rancorous spirit, however, does not seem to have arisen from any peculiar dislike to Owen; for in 1645 he published a quarto volume, entitled "*Vindiciæ Clavium*," in answer to Cotton's "*Keys of the kingdom of heaven*;" and in 1651 a vindication of the same, in another quarto, in both which he is as personal and as severe towards Cotton and Hooker, as now towards Owen. Cotton was a man of great worth, who had fled from the troubles in England, and had settled in New England; and was the first, among the ministers of this country, who wrote on church government. His book was answered also by Baillie and Rutherford, in Scotland; the former in his "*Dissuasive from the errors of the times*," and by the latter in his "*Due right of Presbyteries*." The dispute between the Presbyterians and Independents is fairly exhausted by the writers referred to, and the reader

who wishes to understand the subject, is referred to these sources for information.

In 1658, Dr. Owen published a small, but excellent work on "Temptation"—the nature and power of it, the danger of entering into it, and the means of preventing that danger. It was the substance of two sermons, and seems, like his other practical treatises, to have been called forth by what he observed in the state of the times.

His next work was "Of the Divine original, authority, self-enduring light and power of the Scriptures," with an answer to that inquiry, "How we know the Scriptures to be the word of God?" This work contains also a "Vindication of the purity and integrity of the Hebrew and Greek texts of the Old and New Testament," in some observations on the prolegomena and appendix to the Polyglot Bible of Bishop Walton.

In the aforesaid treatise Owen rests the divine authority of the Holy Scriptures, chiefly on internal evidence, and this he reduces to two particulars, their *light* and their *efficacy*. Whatever conviction may be produced in external evidence, it fell short of the conversion of the soul; and he remarks, "that men are not infidels for want of evidence, but from indifference and aversion to the truth; and their unbelief can only be effectually removed, by the illumination of the Holy Spirit, giving efficacy to the truth by discovering its beauty and glory."

While this work of Owen's, on the divine authority of the Scriptures, was in the press, the prolegomena and appendix of Walton's Polyglot were put into his hands, which induced him to delay the publication until he had examined that work. This great work is a credit to the British nation; it is a work of immense labour and learning, and greatly excels all the other polyglots which have been published. And, considering the extent of Owen's biblical learning, it must strike the reader with some surprise, that he should take alarm at such a publication; but there were some concessions in the prolegomena, which seemed, in his view, to militate with the purity and absolute integrity of the Hebrew and Greek originals; and he believed that these opinions tended to sap the foundations of faith in the infallibility of the sacred Scriptures. And at that time all the orthodox had fully adopted the opinion, received from the Jews, that Providence had so watched over the sacred volume, that not a letter or point of the original had been lost or changed. Little knowledge of the Hebrew MSS. then existed; and an unwavering confidence was placed in the Masora, as a certain defence of the text against every alteration, however minute. The dispute with the Romanists, respecting the perfection of the Scriptures, had also its influence in driving Protestants to an extreme on this subject. The divine authority of the Hebrew points had been called in

question by some bold critics, but by all men of orthodoxy they were, at that time, vindicated as an original and essential part of the inspired text. It cannot, therefore, be considered as evincing any deficiency in biblical learning, that Owen should be found taking alarm at this publication; for in his feelings and views he was in unison with almost all sound theologians who preceded him; and the facts which are familiar to us, in regard to the discrepancies of the manuscripts, were then utterly unknown. It is to be lamented, however, that he entered so hastily into animadversions on a work so truly valuable, and so replete with biblical learning; for neither the cause of sacred learning, nor his own fame, would have suffered had he never written a sentence on the subject. He was not allowed to pass unanswered. Walton immediately published an able, but ill-tempered reply, entitled, "The considerator considered, and the Biblia Polyglotta vindicated." It cannot be denied, and ought not to be concealed, that the bishop had greatly the advantage of Owen in this controversy. But although we have awarded to Walton the victory in this contest, yet we cannot approve the proud and contemptuous manner in which he treats his adversary. He never condescends to mention the name of Owen, although his work was not anonymous. The whole performance breathes a spirit of proud defiance and even contempt, which was en-

tirely uncalled for, as Owen's motives in making opposition to some things in this learned work, were undoubtedly pure. His sole object was to guard the sacred text from a danger which he apprehended threatened it, by the publication of these Prolegomena. The remarks of Walton, therefore, on the motives and design of Owen, are bitter, and not only unchristian, but unfounded. The fact, however, was, that Owen's party was now going down, and Walton foresaw the change in public affairs which must soon take place. "And let it be remarked," says Orme, "in conclusion, that if Dr. Owen could not have produced the Polyglot, neither could Bishop Walton have written the Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews."

The restoration which soon followed, put an end to the controversy; and Walton was in a few months made bishop of Chester.

The third tract in Owen's aforesaid volume was directed particularly against the Quakers, and was entitled, "*Exercitationes adversus Fanaticos.*" It struck many as a strange incongruity, that Owen should write his animadversions on the polyglot in English, and his remarks on the Quakers—generally an unlearned body—in Latin; bishop Walton does not fail to make use of this to the discredit of Owen. But among the Quakers was found an adversary not less bitter and abusive than Walton. This was Samuel Fisher, said to have been originally a minis-

ter of the Church of England. His reply is part of a quarto volume of six hundred pages, and is directed not only against Owen, but Baxter, Dennison, and Tombes, "*Which four fore-men,*" says he, "hold the sense and senseless faith of the whole fry, and write out the sum of what is, or is to be, said by the whole fraternity of fiery fighters against the true light of Christ, and its true children: by Samuel Fisher, who sometime went astray as a lost sheep among the many shepherds, but is now returned to the great Shepherd and Overseer of the soul," 1660. The confidence, abusive language, and absurdities of this production, are beyond description. Had Samuel Fisher designed to show how wise and righteous he was in his own eyes, and how much he despised others, he could not have done it more effectually than by writing this book. It is extraordinary that a society, professing so much meekness, and so measured in their phrases, should have produced a spirit so fiery as that of Fisher; but the style of this writer is no unfair sample of their controversial writings at that period.

Richard Cromwell, upon his accession to the place of his father, summoned a parliament, which met on the 27th of January, 1659; and on the 4th of February following, we find Owen preaching before that body, on occasion of a private fast. His subject was "The glory and interest of nations professing the gospel."

Baxter charges Owen, with having had a chief agency in pulling down Richard Cromwell, and forcing him to dissolve the parliament which he had summoned; but there seems to be no solid foundation for these allegations; and in themselves they are very improbable. Baxter was probably deceived, in regard to this matter. Calamy also endeavours to fix this charge on Owen in his *Life of Baxter*, and represents Owen as confessing to Baxter, that he had an agency in pulling down Richard Cromwell; but this is very improbable, since Owen solemnly declared, that he had no hand in this business. At any rate, we incline to the side of charity, in a case where there exists no positive evidence. There is more proof that he was active, after the deposition of Richard, in the restoration of the long Parliament; which, if it be true, must go far to exonerate his character from the former charge, as from this body, he and his party could look for but little favour.

Ludlow writes, "that it was alleged that there was not a sufficient number of members left to make up a parliament. Upon this Dr. John Owen having desired me to give him a list of their names, I delivered him one, whereon I had marked those who had sat in the house since the year 1648, and were yet alive, amounting to the number of one hundred and sixty. The Doctor having perused it, carried it to those at Wallingford House,"



and the fact is, that the Long Parliament was restored.

Owen preached before the Parliament, for the last time, on the 8th of May, 1659, which was the second day after it met. Great apprehensions were now entertained respecting the designs of Monk. Formerly he had acted with the Independents; now he was seemingly disposed to support the Presbyterians. To ascertain his real plan, Caryl and Barker were despatched to Scotland, with a letter to the general, from Dr. Owen, in the name of the Independent churches to which he was considered as belonging. The commissioners reasoned with Monk entirely on the ground of his connexion with the Independent churches, and endeavoured to persuade him to remain quietly in Scotland, for the present, and not to think of marching his army into England. Monk heard what they had to say but gave them no satisfaction; but sent them back with a letter addressed to Dr. Owen, Mr. Greenhill, and Mr. Hook, full of unmeaning compliments, hypocritical professions, and promises, never intended to be fulfilled. The conclusion which they could not but draw from all that he said, was, that no dependence could be put in him. The Independents were now thrown into great perplexities: for their very existence was at stake: they were of opinion that they had as much to fear from the power of the Presbyterians, as from the return of the king.

They only wanted protection and liberty; but these moderate demands they knew that neither party would agree to, if it once obtained power. The Presbyterians, however, completely predominated. Every thing was in train for the restoration of the king, and the greatest hopes of favour and promotion were entertained by the party. Dr. Owen was ejected by the Parliament from the deanery of Christ's Church and Reynolds restored. He is said not to have borne his ejection very meekly; but little confidence can be placed in such party statements.

Thus terminated Owen's connexion with the Commonwealth, and with the public politics of the time. The whole history of his connexion with the government and politics of the country, furnishes to us an instructive lesson, which is, that the less ministers of the gospel have to do with the politics of this world, the better for their own peace and reputation, and the better for their success in the work of their holy vocation. Owen, perhaps, acquitted himself as well, in the important and difficult circumstances in which he was placed, as any other man would have done. And there is evidence that in the midst of all his numerous and perplexing duties, he maintained a close walk with God in secret, and maintained a degree of habitual, spiritual mindedness, which has been the privilege of very few, in similar circumstances.

## CHAPTER IX.

AFTER Dr. Owen was dismissed from the deanery of Christ's Church, he retired to Stadham, his native place, where he had purchased an estate; and where, during his residence in Oxford, he had collected a small congregation. To them he continued to preach for some time, and many of his former hearers in Oxford, who had derived benefit from his labours, occasionally resorted to him at Stadham. But this congregation was not suffered long to enjoy the labours of their pastor undisturbed: it was broken up by the militia, and Owen had to remove from place to place, for security.

It has been to some a matter of surprise, that considering the part which Owen had acted, and the place which he had occupied under the Protectorate, he was not excepted from the benefit of the act of oblivion, passed after the king's return. But such was the opinion of his integrity and learning entertained by the people, that such a measure would have been very unpopular; especially as it was known, that he had no concern in bringing the late king to the scaffold. Indeed, some of the prime advisers of king Charles II. seem to have had an esteem for Owen. Sir Edward Hyde, afterwards lord Clarendon, Chancellor of the kingdom, treated him with great kindness and respect; and requested

him, if he could not conform, to spend his time in writing against the Roman Catholics; but not to disturb the public peace by holding conventicles. His enemies circulated a report that he promised the Chancellor, that he would comply with his request and not preach any more; but that in a short time he broke his promise by preaching at Stadham. This he positively denied, and it is no how credible, that a man of Owen's principles and courage should ever make such a promise.

As Owen held no living in the church, he was not affected by the act of uniformity. He took no part therefore in the negotiations for a comprehension in the church establishment, in which the Presbyterians were engaged, and in regard to which all these sanguine hopes were frustrated. He and his party desired no comprehension, of this kind: all they asked was toleration and liberty. We are therefore not called upon to give any history of the Bartholomew ejection: it was a strong measure; but just what might have been expected from the spirit of the court. The only wonder is, that the leaders of the Presbyterian party should have been so egregiously deceived in their expectations. And whilst the measure cannot easily be condemned in terms too severe, it cannot be denied, that some of its results have been very beneficial to Christian liberty and evangelical truth. The truth is, the Church of England was unworthy of the men she cast out; while they, by this

means, were taught better views of the true nature of the Christian dispensation, and in the enjoyment of a pure conscience and the liberty of Christ, possessed a happiness, which the benefices of the church could never confer. They originated many of those societies which have preserved the light of the pure gospel in the country, which otherwise would not have existed; and have furnished to posterity, the richest treasure of evangelical and practical treatises, which can be found in any language. Their conduct too was a noble testimony to the power of religious principle, to which the seal of the divine approbation was attached.

The first important work which Dr. Owen published, after the restoration, was written in Latin, and was entitled "Theologoumena," or, "Six books on the nature, rise, progress, and study of true theology. In which also the origin and growth of true and false religious worship and the more remarkable declensions and restorations of the church, are traced from their first sources. To which are added Digressions concerning universal grace—the origin of the sciences—Notes of the Roman Church—the origin of letters—the ancient Hebrew letters—Hebrew punctuation—Versions of the Scriptures—Jewish rites, &c." This work was much more known and read on the continent of Europe, than in Great Britain. It was reprinted at Bremen 1684, and at Franeker in 1700.

This Theologoumena may be called a critical history of religion. The first book treats of theology in general—of the natural theology of the first man—and of its corruption and loss by the entrance of sin. In the second book, he discusses the Antediluvian theology. The third book, treats of the Postdiluvian theology, and the progress of idolatry, till the time of Abraham. The fourth book, is on the Abrahamic and Mosaic theology. The fifth treats of the corruption, reformation, and abolition of the Mosaic system. The sixth and last book treats of Evangelical theology, and the proper method of studying it. The work discovers a vast extent of reading, and a profound acquaintance with the whole compass of sacred and profane learning. On doctrinal subjects it agrees with his English works. In the Digressions, there are some curious, speculative discussions; and his views of the proper method of studying theology are still worthy of the attention of students. It is somewhat remarkable, that no translation of this learned work has ever been given to the English public: a man by the name of Hooper, made some progress in a translation, but died before it was completed; and it may be doubted whether such a work would be successful; unless great liberty were exercised, both in adding and curtailings; for on several of the subjects discussed, a total revolution has taken place in the opinions of the learned since it was written; and

information which the book contains has been superseded by numerous, valuable works in every department of theology.

Owen's next work was on the popish controversy. In 1661 a volume made its appearance, entitled "Fiat Lux; or, A general conduct to a right understanding betwixt Papist and Protestant, Presbyterian and Independent, by J. V. C. a friend to men of all religions." The author of this work was John Vincent Cane, a Franciscan friar, who had written several things before on this controversy. This piece contains a great display of moderation, and a large portion of craft. Its object is to show that there is no reason for men's quarreling about religion—that on this subject every thing is so obscure, no one ought to set himself up as a guide to another—that the various sects of Protestants have no advantage over one another; and none of them any over popery, which is innocent in its principles, and unblameable in its conduct to them all.

This work was put into Owen's hand by a person of quality, probably Clarendon, with a request that he would answer it. Accordingly, in 1662, he published "Animadversions on 'Fiat Lux,' by a Protestant." In the preface he says, "The author of *Fiat* seems at first to be a Naphtali, giving goodly words, but though the voice we hear is sometimes that of Jacob, the hands are the hands of Esau." He extracts out of the mass of

confusion of which it is composed the leading principles and statements, and replies to them with great spirit and pertinency. He does not undertake the defence of any party, but joins issue on the grand principles of Protestantism. The doctor, in this performance, has indulged his vein for satire more than he commonly does, which renders the reading of the book more pleasant than it would otherwise be. To Owen's "Animadversions" Cane published a short reply, in which he seemed less anxious to defend his former work than to find out his opposer, and bring odium upon him as one of the demagogues of the commonwealth. This led Owen to meet him again, in a larger work, to which he prefixed his name, entitled "A Vindication of the Animadversions on 'Fiat Lux,' wherein the principles of the Roman Church as to moderation, unity, and truth are examined; and certain important controversies respecting the rule of faith, Papal supremacy, the mass, images, &c. are examined." This work is not limited to a reply to Cane; it embraces the substance of the popish controversy. It is divided into twenty-four chapters, in each of which he treats of some important fact or principle in dispute. It abounds with learning and strong reasoning, and shows how much the author was at home on the minutest parts of that widely extended controversy.

For this work, strange as it may seem, the



doctor found it difficult to procure an *imprimatur*. The bishops entertained a greater dislike to Dr. Owen than they did to the Romanists. Indeed to the latter some of them were secret friends, as afterwards appeared. Their objections were of the most frivolous kind, as that he did not give the title of *saint* to the apostles; and attempted to prove that there was no evidence that Peter ever was at Rome. To please them, he consented to change his appellation of the apostles; although he alleged that the title *apostle* was more honourable than that of *saint*; but as to the other point he refused to make any alteration until convinced of his mistake. It is probable that this important work would have been suppressed had it not been for Sir Edward Nicholas, one of the principal secretaries of state, a man of unblemished character, and highly esteemed for his public and private virtues, who applied to the Bishop of London to have it licensed.

Lord Clarendon appears to have been much gratified with these anti-popish works of Owen, and sought an interview with him, in which he complimented him as having more merit in this controversy than any English writer of that time. He, at the same time, offered him preferment in the Church; and had he complied, the highest honours of the hierarchy would doubtless have been open to him. This offer he of course declined. He was too much of an *independent* in more

senses than one, to barter his freedom for office, or honour, or wealth. Clarendon asked him what, in regard to toleration, he would require. He answered, "Liberty to those who agreed in doctrine with the Church of England." This was all which he at the time thought it prudent to demand, as he did not wish to open a door for the Romanists; and almost all, at this time, however they might differ in other things, were agreed so far as to assent to the doctrinal articles of the Church of England. This answer led to a report that Owen was not in favour of extending toleration to any but such as agreed with the doctrines of the Church of England. This, however, is so contrary to his known and avowed sentiments, that it requires no refutation. For political reasons, he, with many ardent friends of religious liberty, was unfriendly to the toleration of the Roman Catholics, because they not only are sworn subjects of a foreign potentate, but have uniformly been the enemies of liberty, and avowed advocates of persecution in matters of religion; so that his love of liberty led him to be unwilling to tolerate those who were its sworn enemies.

In 1662, he published a discourse concerning "Liturgies and their imposition." This is a well-reasoned and a well-written Tract, in ten chapters. It is not particularly directed against the liturgy of the Church of England, but is intended to prove that such forms have

no foundation, and that it is unlawful to impose them, and sinful to submit to them. The principle involved in this discussion is of great importance, and it would not be easy to find the subject so thoroughly and judiciously discussed within a small compass as in this work; and it never has been answered.

In the year 1663, Dr. Owen received an invitation from the First Congregational Church in Boston, New England, to become their pastor. Of this church Mr. Cotton first, and then Mr. Norton, had been pastors. The latter being dead, the church was desirous of filling his place with such a man as Dr. Owen. Their application was seconded by a very respectful letter from the General Court of Massachusetts, signed by Governor Endicott. As this letter is written in both a pious and pleasant style, it will not be unacceptable to the reader, who wishes to compare the former with our own times, to have the opportunity of perusing it.

*"Reverend Sir,—It hath pleased the Most High God, possessor of heaven and earth, who giveth no account of his matters, to take unto himself that pious, and eminent minister of the gospel, Mr. John Norton, late teacher of the church of Christ in Boston, whose praise is in all the churches: the suitable and happy repair of which breach is of great concernment, not only to that*

church but to the whole country. Now, although most of us are strangers to you, yet having seen your labours, and heard of the grace and wisdom communicated to you from the Father of lights, we thought meet to write these, to second the call and invitation of that church unto yourself, to come over and help us; assuring you that it will be very acceptable to this Court, and we hope to the whole country, if the Lord shall direct your way hither, and make your journey prosperous to us. We confess the condition of this wilderness doth present little that is attractive, as to outward things, neither are we unmindful that the undertaking is great, and trials many that accompany it. The persons that call you, are unworthy, sinful men, of much infirmity, and may possibly fall short of your expectation, (considering the long and liberal day of grace afforded us;) yet as Abraham and Moses, being called of God, by faith forsook their country, and the pleasures thereof, and followed the Lord; the one not knowing whither he went, the other to suffer affliction with, and bear the manners of the people of God in the wilderness; and God was with them and honoured them; so we desire that the Lord would clear your call, and give you his presence. You may please to consider those that give you this call, as your brethren and companions in tribulation; and are in this wilderness for the faith and testimony of

Jesus; and that we yet enjoy, through the distinguishing favour of God, the pleasant things of Zion in peace and liberty. And while the Lord shall see meet to entrust us with his mercy, we hope no due care will be found wanting in the government here established, to encourage and cherish the churches of Christ, and the Lord's faithful labourers in his vineyard. Thus praying to the God of the spirits of all flesh, to set a man over this congregation of the Lord, that may go in and out before them, and make your call clear, and your voyage successful, to us; that if the Lord shall vouchsafe to us such a favour, you may come to us in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.

With our very kind love and respect, we remain your very loving friends,

JOHN ENDICOTT.

In the name and by the appointment of the General Court, sitting at Boston, New England, the 20th October, 1663."

Owen's answer to this letter has not been found, but we know from other sources, that for a while he was much inclined to accept the invitation; and it is even said, that he had proceeded so far as to put some of his goods on board a ship about to sail to New England. Neither have we been able to learn precisely, what it was which eventually discouraged him from coming to America. In a letter of Captain Gookins, one of the

assistant governors of Massachusetts, we have the following information on this point: "Dr. Owen, and some choice ones, who intended to come with me are diverted, and that not from the hopes of better times in England, but from fears of worse in America, which some new counsels gave them occasion for; so that, in all probability, a new cloud is gathering, and storm preparing for us." By some it has been said that he was stopped by an order from court, when just ready to embark.

The troubles of non-conformists increased every day. Dr. Owen had his own share of these sufferings. He preached at Stadham as long as he could, and then went and resided in London, where he lived very much in retirement, but preached as often as he found opportunity. Two awful calamities visited London, about this time; the plague, and the conflagration. Although the penal laws against Dissenters were not repealed, they were carried into execution with less rigour. Temporary places of worship, called *tabernacles*, were erected, in which many non-conformist ministers preached to crowded and attentive audiences. Among these were Owen, and other Independents. The fall of Lord Clarendon, and the temporary disgrace of Archbishop Sheldon, and Bishop Morley, who had been the principal advisers of severe measures against the non-conformists, contributed still further to relax the rigour of the

laws; and the king himself began, or affected to see the bad policy of some of the late proceedings.

Owen, about this time, wrote several tracts calculated to enlighten the public mind, and to soften the hearts of the persecutors, as, "An Account of the grounds and reasons on which Protestant Dissenters desire their liberty;" "A Letter concerning the present excommunications;" "Indulgence and Toleration considered, in a letter to a person of honour;" "A Peace-offering, in an Apology and humble Plea for indulgence and liberty of conscience." These are replete with clear and sound reasoning on the subject of liberty and toleration.

About this time Dr. Owen preached statedly to a congregation of his own forming, consisting, among others, of many officers of the army, with whom he had been formerly connected. He also set up a *Lecture*, to which many persons of quality resorted, and also many distinguished citizens.

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## CHAPTER X.

IN 1667, Dr. Owen published, "A Brief Instruction in the worship of God, and discipline of the churches of the New Testament. By way of question and answer."

This work was published anonymously, but it is not difficult to recognize the style of Dr. Owen. It contains only fifty-three questions, which, with their explications, are abundantly long, and are frequently divided into several sections. His principles, as an Independent, are of course brought out in this treatise, but the subject is not treated controversially, nor indeed theoretically, but practically. Baxter informs us, that this catechism was *offensive to many*. It was answered by Benjamin Camfield, Rector of Whitby, in Derbyshire, who in reply, published an octavo volume, under the title, "A Serious Examination of the Independents' Catechism, &c." The publication of this Catechism led Mr. Baxter to propose to Dr. Owen, a union between the Presbyterians and Independents. That great and excellent man was for ever writing in favour of peace, and proposing schemes of union, while he very seldom used the means best adapted to accomplish these desirable ends. He seems invariably to have forgot that the way to produce peace and union is not by disputing for them, or by chiding in an angry tone those who differ from us. His present attempt was not more successful than many others which he had before made. And, indeed, from the manner in which he accosted Dr. Owen, in proposing it, there was small prospect of a successful issue. "I told Dr. Owen," says he, "that I must deal free-



ly with him; that when I thought of what he had done formerly, I was much afraid, lest one who had been so great a breaker, would not be made an instrument in healing." "But, in other respects, I thought him the fittest person in England for the work; partly because he could understand it, and partly because his experience of the humours of men, and of the mischiefs of dividing principles and practices had been so very great, that if experience should make any man wise and fit for a healing work, it should be him." He goes on to say, "a Catechism for Independency, which he had lately written, was my chief motive, because he had there given up two of the worst principles of *popularity*;" acknowledging "that the people have not the power of the keys; and that they give not this power to the pastor." Mr. Baxter soon drew up abundance of theses, as the matter of common concord, and left them with Owen, who objected to their number. On this he produced another draft of the things in which Presbyterians and Independents were agreed, on which he requested Owen's remarks; who wrote to him, at some length, pointing out several things which would require reconsideration; but, at the same time, expressing his cordial approbation of the object, and of the general plan proposed. This produced a long letter from Baxter, in reply to his doubts and exceptions. He still insinuates

suspicious of Owen's sincerity, which must have rendered the negotiation unpleasant; and this, together with a doubt respecting the benefits to be derived from such a union, seems to have discouraged the Doctor from prosecuting the plan. After more than a year's delay, Owen returned the papers with a laconic reply, as Baxter informs us, expressive of his general approbation of the scheme, but his doubts respecting the particular process proposed. "This," says Baxter, "was the issue of my third attempt for union, with the Independents."

Orme enters into a defence of the Independents, in regard to this matter, but we deem it unnecessary to follow him; but will merely transcribe their sentiments on the subject of the union of Christians, as they are appended to the articles agreed upon at the Savoy conference. "Such reforming churches, as consist of persons sound in the faith, and of conversation becoming the gospel, ought not to refuse the communion of each other, so far as may consist with their own principles, respectively, though they walk not, in all things, according to the same rules of church order. Churches gathered and walking according to the mind of Christ, judging other churches though less pure, to be true churches, may receive into occasional communion with them, such members of those churches as are credibly testified to be godly, and to live without offence."

That which these eminent men could not effect by argument and disputation, was, nevertheless, brought about, after their death. The Presbyterian and Independent churches in London, and its vicinity, united on some general principles, in the year 1696; but it does not belong to this place to give an account of the nature, and results of this agreement. The sentiments of Owen, as expressed in a sermon preached on occasion of two churches uniting, are judicious. "I should be very sorry," says he, "that any man living should outgo me in desires that all who fear God throughout the world, especially in these nations, were of one way as well as of one heart. I know I desire it sincerely; but I do verily believe, that when God shall accomplish it, it will be the *effect* of love not the *cause* of love. It will proceed from love before it brings forth love. There is not a greater vanity in the world, than to drive men into a particular profession, and then to suppose that love will be the necessary consequence of it: to think that if by sharp rebukes, by cutting, bitter expressions, they can but drive men into such and such practices, that then love will certainly ensue." It is very probable, that in this language, Owen refers to the late attempt of Baxter, to bring about a union between the Presbyterians and Independents. Baxter also refers to the same abortive effort, in his "Cure of Church Divisions," published in 1670. He

confesses, that for twenty years, he had been preaching, and writing, and praying for the Church's peace, but to no purpose. "I have," says he, "but made a wedge of my bare hand, by putting it into the cleft, and both sides closing upon it to my pain, I have turned both parties, which I endeavoured to part in the fray, against myself; when each side had but one adversary, I had two." The truth is, that Baxter, though a most devoted servant of Christ, put too much keenness of temper into all his peaceable proposals; and this, no doubt, was one main reason of his frequent failure. In promoting love, while he always acted from pure and upright motives, he did not sufficiently study the best means of accomplishing the end.

In 1668, by the death of a rich cousin in London, Dr. Owen succeeded to a legacy of five hundred pounds sterling, which with the proceeds of his landed estate, and the sale of his works, enabled him to live comfortably, although it is probable, that he received little, or nothing for his ministerial labours. And as these were much and often interrupted, it left him the more time for writing, which he appears to have improved conscientiously and diligently. About this time some of his most important works which had been long in preparation, were made public. As our interest in the life of Dr. Owen is chiefly as a theological writer, we wish to give as particular an account as we can of the several

works, which from time to time, proceeded from his pen.

The first, in the order of time, which he published at this period, was, "The Nature, Power, Deceit, and Prevalency of the remainders of Indwelling Sin, in Believers." This, like most of his practical treatises was the substance of a series of sermons, from Rom. vii. 21.

It assumes the hereditary and universal depravity of man, and confines itself entirely to the experience which believers have of the conflict between sin and grace, to which they are perpetually subject. It discovers a deep acquaintance with the malignity of sin, and the deceitfulness and desperate wickedness of the human heart. It has a near affinity to a treatise already mentioned, on the "Mortification of Sin." The remains of inbred corruption sufficiently account for the little progress which is generally made in the Christian life, and for the lamentable misconduct and falls to which men who have named the name of Christ are frequently left. It will also account for the want of that solid peace and enjoyment of which believers often complain. These things were matter of lamentation in Owen's time as they are still. It is true, we now have a larger portion of public zeal, and of bustling activity in promoting the interests of religion. This is well, and should be encouraged, and must be a matter of thankfulness to every sincere

Christian. But the deceitfulness of sin may operate as effectually, though less obviously, in many, whose zeal for the Lord of Hosts may appear very prominent, as in times when such exertions were unknown. It is much easier to subscribe money to religious societies, to make speeches at public meetings, to unite in plans of associated usefulness, than to sit in judgment over the heart, or to correct our aberrations, disposition, spirit, and conduct. There may be much professional warmth, and lively sympathy at an anniversary meeting, when there is great inward, spiritual decay. There may, in short, be a merging of personal, secret religion, in the bustle and parade of general profession and public life.

Not long after this publication, he brought out his "Exposition of the cxxxth Psalm, in which the nature of the forgiveness of sin is declared, the truth and reality of it asserted, and the case of a soul distracted with the guilt of sin, and relieved by a discovery of forgiveness with God, is at large discoursed."

It is probable that Owen was led to expound this psalm for the benefit of others, because in early life, he had derived great benefit and comfort from the fourth verse of it. "I myself," says he, "preached Christ some years, when I had very little if any experimental acquaintance with access to God through Christ; until the Lord was pleased to visit me with sore affliction, whereby I

was brought to the mouth of the grave, and under which my soul was oppressed with horror and darkness; but God graciously relieved my spirit, by a powerful application of Psalm cxxx. 4. 'But there is forgiveness with thee that thou mightest be feared.' From whence I received special instruction, peace, and comfort, in drawing near to God, through the Mediator; and preached there-upon immediately after my recovery." This work partakes largely both of the faults and excellencies of its author; for it is prolix, verbose, and diffuse; but it contains clear and satisfactory views of the nature of the soul's approach to and fiducial intercourse with God, through Christ. If the leading ideas in this volume had been judiciously condensed by the author, it might have been one of his most useful works; and if some one now, capable of entering into the religious views and spirit of Owen, would take the pains to throw out superfluous matter, and to reduce the remainder to order and perspicuity, without suffering the spirit to evaporate in the abridgment, he would render a good service to evangelical spiritual religion. No works need to be abridged more than Owen's, and yet none are more difficult to be successfully abridged; for the mere change of words for others which may seem to us more proper; or the alteration of the collocation, often destroys the peculiar spirit and unction of the writer; for the mind in a

certain state of pious feeling leads to a mode of expression, which indicates by a sort of instinctive sympathy, the emotion which is felt, and other minds strangely understand these external indications of inward feeling. Here is a quality of style which no rules can enable us to acquire; it is the effect of the inward feelings, and is more penetrating and powerful than the most artificially wrought rhetoric. That pious emotion should thus affect the speech of the living speaker, whose countenance we see, and whose tones we hear, is not so wonderful; but that something of the same power should be communicated to writing, so that the reader should perceive it, and as it were, hold communion with the writer and his feelings, hundreds of years after his death, is indeed a fact, but not susceptible perhaps of philosophical solution. We have experienced what has now been described, more sensibly in no writings than those of Owen; and it is on this account, that notwithstanding all their prolixity and obscurity, his practical treatises are prized above most, by the spiritual Christian. It has also been objected to this discourse, that the author, writing doubtless, from the long experience which he had had of darkness, and deep and distressing conviction, has made such exercises too prominent, and too much a necessary part of Christian experience; which may serve to discourage those sincere Christians who have been led along a smoother



path, and have been brought cordially to embrace Christ and his free salvation, without experiencing all those pungent and awful convictions, through which some are brought, and which are fully set forth in this treatise. How far there may be foundation for this exception, we are not prepared to say, but it has been mentioned, that the book may be read with a recollection of this feature, by such as would be in danger of discouragement, while they are of that number whom God would have his servants to comfort, and not to bruise and depress. But it should be kept in mind, that many professors are incapable of going along with such descriptions of the exercises of the true penitent, in all his fears, discouragements, and distresses; not because they have been led in a somewhat different path; but because they are total strangers to a work of grace in their hearts; they have not yet taken the first lesson in experimental religion; and the language of the contrite heart is unknown to them; for while they have a form of godliness, its power they deny; and it is exceedingly important that such should be convinced that there is something in religious experience with which they are, as yet, entirely unacquainted.

In this important year also, Dr. Owen published his greatest work on which he had long been employed, his "Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews." This learned

and laborious work was published in four successive folio volumes, with a number of very learned "Exercitations" prefixed. The last volume did not appear until 1684. This valuable work had become very scarce; indeed there were no copies in market, except when some library was exposed to sale. But in 1813, a new edition was published in London, by the Rev. George Wright, in seven octavo volumes; which may be considered as completing his works in octavo. Although many before him had undertaken to give an exposition of this important, and in some respects, difficult part of Scripture; yet none had come to the work, so well qualified to do justice to it, as Dr. Owen. To eminent piety was added a mind enriched with all the various stores of theological learning, matured by age and experience, and enlarged by the consistent and most extensive views of the whole scheme of divine revelation.

He possessed a mind naturally acute, and sharpened by constant and extended intercourse with enlightened and cultivated society; also, a habit of application and perseverance, of unspeakable importance to such an undertaking; of a copiousness of language which supplied inexhaustible facility of conveying his sentiments, on every subject. The Exercitations, which in the octavo edition form the first two volumes, are peculiarly valuable. They contain a vast trea-

sure of solid learning and laborious research; and independently of the commentary, may be of much service to the elucidation of other parts of the sacred volume. In them, he examines and establishes the canonical authority of the epistle; inquires who was the author, and proves that it was Paul; investigates the time when it was written; and shows that it must have been shortly after Paul's release from his first imprisonment—considers the language in which it was written, and proves it to have been Greek. The quotations from the Old Testament are made an object of particular attention—also, the unity of the church—the Jewish distribution of the Old Testament with their oral, or traditionary law—the Messiah, and the predictions respecting him—the faith of the ancient Church in the Messiah—his appearances under the former dispensation—the evidence that he must have long since come—the seventy weeks of Daniel—Jewish traditions respecting Messiah—proofs, that Jesus of Nazareth is the true Messiah—objections of the Jews against Christianity—the state and ordinances of the Church before, and during the time of the law—the law itself—its precepts, threatenings and promises—the tabernacle—the priesthood, and the sacrifices. These are the subjects treated in the first volume. The second is entirely occupied with the priesthood of Christ, and the day consecrated to rest and religion. Concerning

the first of these subjects, he remarks, in the preface; "It is wholly without the compass of my knowledge, if the reader can find any other work in which the doctrine of the priesthood of Christ hath been handled in its proper order and method, as to its origin, causes, nature, and effects."

As the subjects treated in these Dissertations are exceedingly interesting to every lover of divine truth, so they are here treated with so much profound sagacity and varied learning, that they cannot but afford delight as well as instruction to every pious reader. They involve, it is true, especially those in the first volume, a great amount of rabbinical learning, rendered necessary in controversy with the Jews. There may be found here some opinions, to which every reader will not be prepared at once to give his assent; but in general the sentiments expressed, will commend themselves to the impartial reason of every intelligent person.

The exposition itself may be considered in a threefold light; first as an explanation of a portion of Scripture; secondly, as a body of controversy; and thirdly, as a practical application of divine truth.

As an exegetical explication of an important epistle it is characterized by the general accuracy of its interpretations, and the conscientious manner in which the author has traced out the meaning of the inspired writer. Other commentaries have a greater parade

of critical learning; but after all, none of them will bear a comparison with this of Owen, when the true end of such works is considered. The following passage from his preface, will exhibit the true state of the author's mind in undertaking and prosecuting this great work; "For the exposition of the epistle itself, I confess, that I have had thoughts of it for many years, and I have not been without regard to it, in the whole course of my studies. But yet I must now say, that after all my searching and reading, prayer and assiduous meditation have been my only resort, and by far the most useful means of light and assistance. By these have my thoughts been freed from many an entanglement, into which the writings of others had cast me, or from which they could not deliver me. Careful have I been, as of my life and soul, to bring no prejudicate sense to the words, to impose no meaning of my own, or of other men's upon them, nor to be imposed upon by the reasonings, pretences, or curiosities of any; but always went nakedly to the word itself, to learn humbly the mind of God in it, and to express it as he should enable me. To this end, I always considered, in the first place, the sense, meaning, and import of the words of the text—their original derivation, use in other authors, especially the LXX. of the Old Testament, in the books of the New, and particularly the writings of the same author.

Ofttimes the words expressed out of the Hebrew, or the things alluded to among that people, I found to give much light to the words of the apostle. To the general rule of attending to the design and scope of the place, the subject treated of, mediums fixed on for arguments, and methods of reasoning, I still kept in my eye, the time and season of writing this epistle, the state and condition of those to whom it was written, their persuasions, prejudices, customs, light, and traditions; I kept also in my view, the covenant privileges, and worship of the church of old; the translation of covenant-privileges and worship to the gentiles upon a new account; the course of providential dispensations that the Jews were under; the near expiration of their church and state; the speedy approach of their utter abolition and destruction, with the temptations that befel them on all these various accounts; without which it is impossible for any one justly to follow the apostle, so as to keep close to his design, or fully to understand his meaning."

The Exposition also contains a large portion of controversy, chiefly on two subjects, Judaism and Socinianism. It is obvious how the former came to occupy so much of his attention; but the reason of his introducing the latter may require some explanation. Against the Scripture doctrine of the sacrifice of Christ, the Polish Socinians had directed all their strength, learning, and ingenuity. They

endeavoured to make out that whatever was said on this subject, in the New Testament, and especially in this epistle should be understood figuratively; and that in reality there was no such thing as an atoning sacrifice or priesthood, belonging to Christianity. As Owen believed that these doctrines lay at the very foundation of the Christian religion, he could not let so favourable an opportunity pass, as was now offered, of vindicating these doctrines, and setting aside the Socinian glosses, by which these precious truths were denied or obscured. Accordingly, the Christian who wishes to be established in the truths controverted by Socinians, will find in this work such a body of argument and evidence in their support, as will remove every ground of scepticism and unbelief. We hesitate not to affirm, that the proper understanding of the epistle to the Hebrews alone is amply sufficient to put to flight all the sophistry and declamation of the adversaries of the deity, sacrifice, and priesthood of Christ.

On the Jewish controversy there is almost every thing that is of importance. Indeed, these two controversies have many things in common; so that a solid argument against the Jews is often applicable, with slight variation, to the principles of the Unitarians, and *vice versa*.

One thing which stamps this exposition with peculiar excellence above most, is its practical tendency. The eminent godliness,

as well as learning of the author, appears conspicuous on every page. His reasonings always terminate in some holy result. After reading the criticisms of an accurate scholar, the arguments of a sound logician, and the illustrations of a fertile imagination, we are furnished with directions for self-examination, or sent away with a warm exhortation to abound in prayer, if we hope to understand the mind of the Spirit. This is just as it ought to be. The theory of Christianity without the practice, is like a body without the spirit; the practice without the theory, is not a reasonable service. To treat the Bible as an ancient classic, is using an unholy freedom with its sacred contents; while an indifference to the precise meaning of the Holy Spirit, manifests ignorance of the important connexion that subsists between right sentiments and suitable practice in religion, as well as a want of regard to the authority of God, speaking in his word.

The three parts of this exposition are so arranged, that each may be read separately from the others, without any confusion. The reader may go over the critical exposition of every verse consecutively, without reading a word of the controversial or practical parts; and so of the others.

We learn from the author himself, that this work was on hand for at least twenty years, during which time his life was much chequered, and many interruptions from various



causes were experienced, and sometimes he tells us of "straits, and exclusion from the use of books, occasioning uncertainties, failings and mistakes." "The exposition of the Hebrews," says Owen's biographer, "forms a pedestal on which he will appear an object of admiration to all future generations."

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## CHAPTER XI.

It is a remarkable, but mortifying fact, that men who themselves have just escaped from the fires of persecution for conscience sake, are capable, as soon as they get power into their hands, of persecuting others who conscientiously differ from them. The first inhabitants of New England had been obliged to forsake their native land and seek an asylum in a foreign country; and at length took up their residence in the howling wilderness, where they were surrounded by savages, and where they were long exposed to hardships almost too much for human endurance. It might have been expected that a people who had suffered so much for the sake of religious liberty, would have been disposed to extend toleration to any who differed from them; but they had imbibed the prevalent doctrine, that our duty to God required us to extirpate heresy and suppress idolatry, by all the

means in our power; and, therefore, when the Quakers and Baptists arose among them, they proceeded against them with an unrelenting severity, not only by imprisonment and exile, but by inflicting capital punishment on some. This course greatly distressed their brethren of the Independent persuasion in England; and the ministers of London, with Dr. Owen at their head, remonstrated earnestly against these persecuting measures, and entreated them to desist from such proceedings. In the conclusion of the letter addressed to their American brethren, they expostulate with them in the following language: "You have the advantage of truth and order, you have the gifts and learning of an able ministry to manage and defend them, you have the care and vigilance of a very worthy magistracy to countenance and protect them, and to preserve the peace; and above all, you have a blessed Lord and Master, who hath the keys of David, who openeth and no man shutteth, living for ever, to take care of his own concernments among his saints. And, assuredly, you need not be disquieted, though some few persons, through their own infirmity and weakness, or through their ignorance, darkness, and prejudices, should, to their disadvantage, turn out of the way, in some lesser matters, into bye-paths of their own. We only make it our hearty request that you would trust God, with his truth and ways, so far as to suspend all rigo-

rous proceedings, in corporal restraints and punishments, on persons that dissent from you, and practice the principles of dissent, without danger or disturbance to the civil peace of the place." This letter was dated March 25th, 1669, and, as Dr. Mather informs us, was not attended with all the effects it ought to have produced; but at length it contributed, with other means, to give the New England churches better views. The subject is here introduced as an evidence of Dr. Owen's uniform adherence to the principles of religious liberty, which in his writings he had avowed.

In 1669, Owen published "A brief declaration and vindication of the doctrine of the Trinity; as also of the person and satisfaction of Christ." This work was not occasioned by any particular Antitrinitarian publication; "but entirely," as he informs us, "from a desire to promote the edification and establishment of the plain Christian." It has been frequently reprinted, and was translated into the Dutch language.

His next publication was in answer to a work on 'Ecclesiastical Polity,' by Mr. Samuel Parker, in which he inveighs against toleration, and asserts the authority of the civil magistrate over the consciences of subjects; and in which he greatly calumniated the non-conformists. Owen's reply, is entitled, "Truth and Innocence Vindicated, in a Survey of a Discourse on Ecclesiastical

Polity." To show the absurdity of Parker's principles, he sums up his opinions in the form of a royal decree, as follows, "Whereas, we have an universal and absolute power over the consciences of all our subjects, in things appertaining to the worship of God; so that if we please, we can introduce new duties never yet heard of, in the most important parts of religion; and may impose on them in the practice of religion and divine worship what we please; so that in our judgment it doth not countenance vice, nor disgrace the Deity: and whereas, this power is naturally inherent in us, not given or granted to us by Jesus Christ, but belonging to us or our predecessors before he was born; and this being such, that we ourselves, if we would, might exercise the special offices or duties of religion in our own person, especially that of the priesthood, though we are pleased to transfer the exercise of it to others; and whereas, all our prescriptions, impositions, and injunctions, on these things, do immediately affect and bind the consciences of our subjects, because they are ours, whether they be right or wrong, true or false, we do enact and ordain as follows: [Here he inserts the author's scheme of religion.] That every man may think, and does think and judge what he pleaseth concerning the things enjoined and enacted by us; for what have we to do with their thoughts and judgments? they are under the empire and dominion of

conscience, which we cannot evade if we would. They may if they please, judge them inconvenient, foolish, absurd; yea, contrary to the mind, will, and law of God: our only intention, will, and pleasure is, to bind them to the constant observation and practice of them, and that under the penalties of hanging and damnation." Extravagant as this statute is, it not only embodies the sentiments inculcated by Parker, but is expressed, for the most part, in his own words.

This work of Owen raised him much in the esteem of all dissenters, and did great credit to his talents and spirit, as well as to the good cause. Parker replied, the following year, and poured out unmeasured abuse upon Owen. He calls him "the great bellwether of disturbance and sedition." "The viper," says he, "is so swelled with venom, that it must either burst or spit its poison," &c.

Though Owen engaged no further in this controversy, the vain-glorious churchman was not permitted to pass without due chastisement. A layman, gave him a scourging which must have caused him to writhe in every nerve. This was Marvel, both a wit and a poet—the most patriotic senator of his time, whose ironical muse often lashed the follies and the vices of the court. This accomplished writer took up the conceited clergyman, and in his "Rehearsal Transposed" turned all the laughers against him, and from

the king down to the tradesman, it was read with delight. There are times and subjects which require the use of ridicule; and if judiciously used, it will sometimes succeed when graver arguments fail. Marvel, however, was assailed by a host of driveling poets, but he stood undismayed by this shower of missiles, and in the second part of the "Rehearsal," again overwhelmed his adversaries, and effectually silenced their battery.

The Parliament which met in 1670, fell upon the non-conformists more furiously than ever. They revived the act against conventicles and made it severer than before. After this bill had passed the commons, Dr. Owen was requested to draw up some reasons against it, which were laid before the House of Lords, by several persons of distinction. But it availed nothing, the bill passed, every bishop voting for it, except Wilkins of Chester, and Rainbow of Carlisle. By this act, any person who attended any other religious worship except that established by law, was liable to heavy fines; and the preacher who attended any such meeting was to pay twenty pounds for the first offence, and forty for the second.

The learned Charles Chauncey, president of Harvard College, having died in February, 1671, Owen was invited to become his successor. For such an office he was eminently qualified. His learning, his talents, his ex-

perience, and his long acquaintance with academical affairs while Vice-chancellor of Oxford, all pointed him out to his brethren in New England, as a most suitable person to fill this important office. He had also invitations to professorships in some of the Dutch Universities, where his learning and abilities were known and appreciated. Why Dr. Owen declined this appointment, we are not informed; but we find him some time afterwards, joining his brethren in a letter of recommendation in favour of Dr. Hoar, as a suitable person for president of that institution, who was about to sail for New England, and who, accordingly, was elected to that office.

The work on the Christian Sabbath, which the doctor had prepared to accompany his Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews, he now sent out in a separate volume. The obligation and sacred nature of this day had been called in question by most of the fanatical sects, which remained, during the period of the commonwealth; and King Charles II. and his licentious court did all in their power to turn the day into a season of sporting and worldly amusement. A work on this subject, was, therefore, peculiarly seasonable, and necessary. While the doctor maintains, by irrefragable arguments, the morality, the binding and perpetual obligation of the Sabbath, and the authority we have for a change of the day; and while he insists upon the

diligent employment and sanctification of the day, in the worship and service of God, he did not think it expedient to encourage that excessive austerity and incessant engagement, which it was the fashion with some to prescribe and inculcate; by which the Sabbath, instead of being an honour and delight, was a heavy burden, and a snare to the consciences of the weak.

Some of his expressions when treating the subject were much censured by some of his brethren. He had said, "That the observance of the Lord's day is to be commensurate to the use of our natural strength on any other day; from morning to night. The Lord's day is to be set apart to the ends of a holy rest unto God, by every one, according as his natural strength will enable him to employ himself, in his lawful occasions, any other day of the week." One would think that there was nothing in this language to give offence to the most scrupulous. Nevertheless it produced an expostulatory letter from Eliot, the apostle of the American Indians; to which the Doctor wrote a reply, which claims our attention, not only as it vindicates him from the suspicion of being unfriendly to the moral obligation of the Lord's day; but also because it affords a fine specimen of the tenderness of his feelings, under the sufferings and unjust reproaches, with which he had been frequently loaded.

"As to what concerns the *natural strength*



of man, I was under some mistake in my expression, or you seem to be so in your apprehension. I never thought, and I have not said, that the continuance of the Sabbath is to be commensurate to the natural strength of man, but only that it is an *allowable means* of men's *continuance* in Sabbath duties; which I suppose you will not deny, lest you should cast the consciences of professors into inextricable difficulties. When first I engaged in that work, I intended not to have spoken one word about the *practical observation* of the day; but only to have endeavoured the *revival* of a truth, which at present is despised among us, and strenuously opposed by sundry divines of the United Provinces, who call the doctrine of the Sabbath *Figmentum Anglicum*. On the desire of some learned men in these parts, it was, that I undertook the vindication of it. Having now discharged the debt, which in this matter, I owed to the truth, and to the church of God, though not as I ought, yet with such a composition, as I hope through the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, might find acceptance with God and with his saints, I suppose I shall not again engage on that subject.

“I suppose there is scarce any one alive in the world, who hath more reproaches cast upon him than I have: though God hath hitherto been pleased, in some measure, to support me under them. I still relieved my-

self by this, that my poor endeavours have found acceptance with the churches of Christ. But my holy, wise, and gracious Father sees it needful to try me in this matter also, and what I have received from you, which it may be, contains not your sense alone, hath printed deeper and left a greater impression on my mind than all the virulent revilings, and false accusations I have met with from my professed adversaries. I do acknowledge to you that I have a dry and barren spirit, and I do heartily beg your prayers, that the Holy One would, notwithstanding all my sinful provocations, water me from above. But that I should now be considered as giving a wound to *holiness*, in the churches, is *one of the saddest frowns in the cloudy brows of Divine Providence*. The doctrine of the Sabbath I have asserted, though not as it ought, yet as well as I could; the observation of it in holy duties to the utmost of the strength for them, which God shall be pleased to give us, I have pleaded for; the necessity also of a serious preparation for it, in sundry previous duties, I have declared. But now to meet with severe expressions—it may be 'tis the will of God that vigour should hereby be given to my former discouragements, and that there is a call in it to cease from these kinds of labours."

The wound which Eliot's letter inflicted on the mind of Owen, serves to show how great was his regard for the judgment of this

apostolic man; but it also teaches us how cautious we should be in casting censure upon pious authors, for some insulated passage, which may appear to us to be susceptible of being construed in a sense unfavourable to our views of Christian duty. In this case, the censure as far as we understand the matter, was misapplied; for the words of Owen admit of a full vindication from the objections made to them.

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## CHAPTER XII.

IN the year 1672, Charles II. having seen the bad effects of the severe laws against dissenters, resolved to suspend their execution by his own royal authority; and accordingly issued "a declaration of indulgence," by which non-conformists and popish recusants were permitted to meet for public worship, on taking out a license for that purpose. Many of the non-conformists scrupled about accepting this indulgence, as it was granted by an arbitrary power and against law, and because it extended to the Romanists, and was probably intended for their relief; but as the thing granted was that to which they had a natural right, and the laws which took it from them were tyrannical; there seems to

have been no solid ground for any scruple; and as to the motive from which it was bestowed, they had nothing to do with it. Owen and his friends appear to have entertained correct views of this subject. "We did, indeed," says he, "accept, and make use of this royal favour; and after that for so many years we had been exposed to all manner of sufferings and penalties, whereby multitudes were ruined in their estates, and some lost their lives, we were glad to take a little breathing from our troubles, under his majesty's royal protection." An address to the king, acknowledging his clemency, and thanking him for the indulgence recently granted, was drawn up by Dr. Owen, signed by the ministers and presented to his majesty. As this paper will show their feelings on this occasion, it is here given entire.

"May it please your Majesty:

We humbly thank you for the favour of this opportunity, wherein we may acknowledge the deep sense which we have of your gracious clemency, the effects whereof we every day enjoy. It is that alone which has interposed between the severity of some laws, and some men's principles, and us, which otherwise would have effected our ruin; though we are persuaded, that neither the one nor the other could countervail your majesty's damage thereby. It is this principally wherein the kings of the earth may render themselves like to the King of heaven;

when by their wisdom, power, and goodness, they relieve the minds of their peaceable subjects, from fear, distress, and distracting anxieties and trials on their persons (rendering their lives burdensome to themselves and useless to others) which your majesty has done towards multitudes of your subjects, in this nation. And we do rejoice in this advantage, to declare to your majesty, that as we have a conscientious respect to all those obligations to loyalty which lie on the commonalty of your subjects, so being capable of a *peculiar one*, in the greatest of our concerns, the liberty of our consciences and assemblies, which others are not (as desiring no more than what they esteem their right by law) we hold it our duty which we engage unto before you, not only to be partakers with them, but to preserve in our minds a peculiar readiness to serve on your majesty's commands, and occasions, as we shall be required or advantaged for it. And we humbly pray the continuance of your gracious favour, and we shall pray that God would continue his presence with you in all your affairs, and continue your royal heart in these counsels and thoughts of *indulgence*, whose beginnings have restored quietness to neighbours, peace to counties, emptied prisons, and filled houses with industrious workers, and engaged the hands of multitudes unto the resolved and endeavoured readiness for your majesty's service, as not knowing any

thing in this world desirable to them, beyond what under your government, and by your favour they may enjoy."

The indulgence now enjoyed, promoted the comfort and increase of the dissenting churches. The Presbyterians and Independents improved the liberty, by setting up a united lecture to resist the progress of Popery, Socinianism, and Infidelity; and also to show their union in all the important doctrines of Christianity. This lecture was held on Tuesday morning, and continued until 1695, when the parties separated on account of the controversy respecting Dr. Crisp. Two of Dr. Owen's discourses preached here, were published in the "Morning Exercises;" in the last of which, preached 1682, and entitled, "The chambers of Imagery in the church of Rome," he traces to its true source, all the apostasy and abominations of the papacy, and of every false system of Christianity.

In 1672, Dr. Owen published, anonymously, "A discourse concerning evangelical love, church peace and unity, with the occasions and reasons of the present differences and divisions about things sacred and religious." This is an excellent work, though less known than some of the author's writings, because his name was not prefixed. His views of love and unity are admirable, and are brought to bear on the controversy then existing, about dissenters attending worship in the parish churches.

Upon the death of Joseph Caryl, in 1673, his congregation united with that of Dr. Owen. On the occasion of their first meeting together, Owen preached them an excellent sermon on the duty, nature and exercise of evangelical love, as the principal thing required of church members to one another, from Col. iii. 14. In it he says, "I declare, with much solemnity, unto this congregation this day, that unless this evangelical love be exerted, not loosely and generally, but among ourselves mutually towards each other, we shall never give up our account with joy to Jesus Christ; nor shall we ever carry on the great work of edification among ourselves. And if God be pleased to give this spirit among you, I have nothing to fear but the mere weakness and depravity of my own heart and spirit."

The united church consisted of more than one hundred and seventy members. Of these only thirty-six were previously under the care of Dr. Owen. This, among Independents, was considered, at that day, a large church; but it was not so much distinguished by the number, as by the quality of some of its members. Among these were Lord Charles Fleetwood, Sir John Hartopp, Col. Desborough, brother-in-law to Oliver Cromwell, Col. Berry, a distinguished officer in the Commonwealth's army, William Steele, sergeant of law, Dr. Staines, Col. Ellistone, Richard Lardner, Sir Thomas Overbury, and a

number of the Shute family; and of the other sex, Lady Abney, Lady Hartopp, Lady Vere Wilkinson, Lady Thompson, the Countess of Anglesea, and the celebrated Mrs. Bendish, grand daughter of Cromwell, and said to have been remarkably like the Protector, in some of the strong features of his character. Religion was not then so rare among persons of rank, as it has since become; even the non-conformists could reckon among their members, not a few individuals in the higher walks of society, who counted it an honour to share their sufferings, as well as their privileges. Fleetwood was a son-in-law of Cromwell, descended from an ancient Lancashire family. He held a post in the court of Charles I., but his principles led him to join the Parliament, and he soon rose to the highest honours it could bestow. He was one of the commissioners appointed to treat with the king, but utterly refused to have any concern in his death. On the death of Ireton he married his widow, and was appointed commander-in-chief of the forces in Ireland, which, by his prudent management, were secured in obedience. After the restoration he was permitted to retire to Stoke Newington, where he spent most of his time, but suffered severely in his property, on account of his adherence to the Dissenters. The sums paid in fines by him and Sir John Hartopp, who married his daughter, are said to have exceeded six thousand pounds ster-



ling. Owen was greatly attached to him, as appears by the letters which he addressed to him. Milton has eulogized him, as one inferior to none in humanity, gentleness, and benignity of disposition.

Major-general Berry, commonly called Col. Berry, was also a very distinguished man. Baxter knew him in his youth, and esteemed him much; but he represents him as having been greatly altered for the worse, after his connexion with Cromwell and the Independents.

Sir John Hartopp was distinguished for his excellent Christian character, and also for his family. He lived to the age of eighty-three, and Dr. Watts preached at his funeral one of his most beautiful sermons, "The happiness of separate spirits made perfect," in which he gives a full length portrait of Sir John. "The book of God was his chief study, and his divinest delight. His Bible lay before him night and day, and he was well acquainted with the writers who explained it best. He was desirous of seeing what the Spirit of God said to men in the original languages; for this end he commenced some acquaintance with the Hebrew, when he was more than fifty years old; and that he might be capable of judging of any text in the New Testament, he kept his youthful knowledge of the Greek language to the latest period of his life. Among the various themes of Christian contemplation,

he took peculiar pleasure in the doctrines of grace, in the display of the glories of the person of Christ, God in our nature, and the wondrous work of redemption by his cross. His conversation was pious and learned, ingenious and instructive. He was inquisitive into the affairs of the learned world, the progress of the arts and sciences, the concerns of the nation, and the interests of the church of Christ; and on all occasions, was as ready to communicate as to inquire. His zeal for the welfare of his country and of the church in it, carried him out to the most extensive and toilsome services, in his younger and middle age. He employed his time, his spirits, his interest, and his riches for the defence of this poor nation, when it was in the utmost danger of popery and ruin. He was three times chosen representative in Parliament, for his county of Leicestershire, in those years when a sacred zeal for religion and liberty strove hard to bring in a bill of exclusion, to prevent the Duke of York inheriting the crown of England. Nor was he ashamed to own and support the despised interest of the Dissenters, when the spirit of persecution raged highest in the days of Charles II. and James II. He was a present refuge for the oppressed, and the special providence of God secured him and his friends from the fury of the oppressor. He enjoyed an intimate friendship with that great and venerable man, Dr. Owen, and this was mutually cultivated with zeal

and delight on both sides, till death divided them. A long and familiar acquaintance enabled him to furnish many memoirs, or matters of fact, towards that brief account of the Doctor's life, drawn up by another hand. Now can we suppose two such souls to have been so happily intimate upon earth, and may we not imagine they found each other among the brighter spirits on high? May we not indulge ourselves to believe, that our late honoured friend hath been congratulated upon his arrival by that holy man, who assisted to direct and lead him thither." The above description is from the sermon of Dr. Watts, referred to above.

Colonel Desborough was descended from a respectable family, and was originally bred to the law; but on the breaking out of the civil wars, he joined the army of the parliament, in which, on account of his valour, he obtained the command of a regiment of horse, and in 1648, rose to the rank of a major-general. He was named one of the high court of justice for the trial of the king, but he had the courage to refuse to sit. He married the Protector's sister, and was one of the lords of his upper house; but such was his firmness and independence of character, that when Cromwell had resolved to assume the title, as well as the power of a king, he opposed the measure, and so managed the affair, as to prevent him from doing what he intended. Milton celebrates him as one of

the heroes of the commonwealth, and as next to Lambert. At the restoration, he endeavoured to make his escape to a foreign country, but was arrested, and excepted from the act of indemnity, but not to forfeit his life. It appears, however, that he lived quietly and privately, all the latter part of his life. Granger says of him, that he was "ungainly in his person, clownish in his manners, and boisterous in his behaviour."

Lady Abney was the daughter of Joseph Caryl, and partook of the piety of her father. Sir Thomas was of an ancient family, and was distinguished for his piety. After the death of his first wife, he married the daughter of John Gunston, Esq. In their house Dr. Watts lived for six and thirty years. The following is the account given of the orders of the family, by the pastor of the church, at the time of the death of Sir Thomas: "Here were, every day, the morning and evening sacrifices of prayer and praise, and reading the holy Scriptures. The Lord's day he strictly sanctified and observed. God was solemnly sought and worshipped, both before and after the family's attendance on public ordinances. The repetition of sermons, the reading of good books, the instruction of the household, and the singing of the Divine praises together, were much of the employment of the holy day: variety and brevity making the whole; not burdensome, but pleasant; leaving at the same time room

for the devotions of the closet, as well as for intervening works of necessity and mercy. Persons coming into such a family, with a serious tincture of mind, might well cry out, 'This is no other than the house of God, this is the gate of heaven.' Beside the ordinary and stated services of religion, occasional calls and seasons for worship were also much regarded. In signal family afflictions, in going on journeys, in undertaking and accomplishing any matters of great moment, God was especially owned by prayer and thanksgiving; the assistance of ministers being often called in, on such occasions. Through the whole course of his life he was priest to his own family; except when a minister happened to be present." From these specimens of religious character in the church of which Dr. Owen was the pastor, we will be led to form a high opinion of the intelligence and piety, which were found among its members.

When the parliament met in 1673, they were highly offended with the king's declaration of indulgence, and insisted on its being recalled. They now passed the famous *Test-act*, by which dissenters were rendered incapable of holding places of power or trust, under government; and the court soon after, renewed its severities, by recalling the licenses which had been granted, and issuing a declaration requiring the execution of the laws against conventicles. In consequence of this change of measures, some were made

to suffer grievously, and among the rest Mr. Baxter. It does not appear, however, that Dr. Owen suffered personally, but he was far from being an unconcerned spectator of the sufferings of others. He wrote, on the occasion, a very spirited paper of "Advice to the citizens of London," in which he expresses very strongly his opinion of the unparalleled severities inflicted on Protestant dissenters. His safety was very probably owing to the high respectability of some of his friends; for he enjoyed the favour of such men as the Earls of Orrery and Anglesea, Lords Wilmoughby, Wharton, and Berkley, and Sir John Trevor, one of the secretaries of state. Nor was it to such men only that Owen was known. Both the king and Duke of York, paid him some attentions. Being in a very languishing state of health, in 1674, he was at Tunbridge-wells, when the Duke of York was there. The duke sent for him, and had several conversations with him in his tent, about the dissenters and conventicles. After his return to London, the king himself sent for him, and conversed two hours with him, assuring him of his favour and respect; and told him that he might have access to him whenever he pleased. Charles also made strong professions of regard for liberty of conscience, declared how sensible he was of the injuries done to dissenters, and as a proof of his good wishes to them, gave the Doctor a thousand guineas to distribute

among those who had suffered most by the late severities. The Doctor thankfully received the royal bounty, and faithfully applied it to the designated objects. The churchmen complained much of this, when they heard it, saying that Owen and the dissenters were pensioned to serve the Popish interest. To this the Doctor replied, with considerable warmth, "that never one person in authority, dignity, or power, in this nation, had ever spoken one word to him about any indulgence or toleration, to be granted to the Papists, and challenges all the world to prove the contrary if they can."

This year, (1674,) an unexpected attack was made on his work on "Communion" by Dr. William Sherlock, in a work entitled, "A Discourse concerning the knowledge of Jesus Christ and our union and communion with him." His objections to Owen are directed particularly against the doctrine of imputation and justification by faith, and are impregnated with the spirit of Arminianism. Owen replied, in a "Vindication of some passages in a discourse concerning communion with God, from the exceptions of William Sherlock, &c." Quoting some of Sherlock's perversions of his words and sentiments, he exclaims, "What doth this man intend? Doth he either not at all understand what I say, or doth he not care what he says himself? What have I done to him? Wherein have I injured him? How have I provoked

him, that he should sacrifice his conscience and reputation to such a revenge?" In railing and abuse Sherlock was more than a match for Owen, but in the lists of theological warfare, he was a very dwarf in the grasp of a giant. Owen exposes his ignorance, his petulance, and vanity, and the inconsistency of his statements, in such a manner as must, if he had any sensibility, have made him blush, that he had meddled with a subject, which he so little understood. The controversy was also taken up against Sherlock by several others besides Owen, particularly by Edward Polhill, and Vincent Alsop. The largest work, however, was written by Robert Ferguson. Sherlock replied to Owen and Ferguson, but made no mention of his other opponents. And in his defence Thomas Hotchkiss, rector of Staunton, entered into the controversy against both Owen and Ferguson. This was called "The Communion Controversy," and only served to make the valuable work which gave occasion to it, to be more extensively circulated. And while all the other pieces have long since disappeared, Owen's work on communion continues to be republished and read with profit by thousands. The second volume of his work on the Hebrews was published in 1674, but we have already spoken of the whole. In the same year, appeared the first part of his elaborate work on the Spirit. It is entitled, "A Discourse concerning the Holy Spirit. In



which an account is given of his name, nature, personality, dispensation, operations, and effects. His whole work in the old and new creation is explained; the doctrine concerning it vindicated from opposition and reproaches. The nature and necessity also of gospel holiness; the difference between grace and morality, or a spiritual life to God in evangelical obedience, and a course of moral virtues is declared." This, though only a part of the contemplated work on this subject, was a folio volume of five hundred and seventy-five pages. The remaining parts he published successively, after considerable intervals, but it will be most convenient to notice the several parts of the work in this place. The next in order is, "The Reason of Faith, or an answer to that inquiry, wherefore we believe the Scripture to be the word of God?" Then came out, "The causes, ways, and means of understanding the mind of God, as revealed in his Word; and a Declaration of the Perspicuity of the Scriptures, with the external means of the interpretation of them." In 1682, he published "The Work of the Holy Spirit in Prayer, with a brief inquiry into the use of mental prayer and forms." And in 1693, came out two posthumous discourses "On the work of the Spirit, as a Comforter, and as he is the author of spiritual gifts." These several treatises complete the work as designed. And it may be truly said, that no work, in any language, contains so complete

an exhibition of the Scripture doctrine of spiritual agency and influence.

It will be impossible, within the short limits to which our work is confined, to give any thing like an analysis of the contents of this great work; we can only briefly refer to the chief divisions of the subject, and request the reader not to be satisfied with any thing short of a perusal of the work itself.

The first part is occupied with an examination of the Deity and personality of the Holy Spirit; and of his operations in conversion and sanctification. The importance of these doctrines to the whole scheme of divine truth revealed in Scripture, is clearly shown, and the various objections answered. He is then naturally led to treat of the Spirit's revelation in the Scriptures; the kind of evidence on which we believe them to be the word of God, and the consistency of using means for the understanding of them, with dependence on spiritual illumination; together with the kind of means we are to employ. This branch of the subject involves some of the nicest and most abstruse points of metaphysical and revealed theology. To say that the author has removed every difficulty and disentangled all the intricacies of a subject, whose difficulties and obscurities arise, partly from the limited capacities of the human mind, partly from the limits which God has prescribed to himself, in his communications to men, and partly from the perverse reason-

ings of philosophical divines, would be saying too much. He has, however, exhibited the doctrine of Scripture fully and fairly; and appealed to general experience for the truth of his representations. On the one hand, Owen was no enthusiast; he expected no illapses, or new revelations, or extraordinary intimations of the will of God; on the other hand, he knew that means are not powers, as laws are not energies. They are merely the *media* through which a superior influence is exerted; and which is, in all cases, essentially necessary, to give them a beneficial result. The fact is easily established; but the nature of that mysterious link which connects divine influence with human duty, it is perhaps not for us to explain.

The necessity of such a work arose from the existing state of things, at that time. On the one hand, the enthusiastic sects which sprung up in the time of the commonwealth, laid claim to immediate communications of the Spirit, which superseded the instructions of the written word, or were independent of it; and on the other, a set of ministers were brought into the church, who adopted a kind of Pelagianized Arminianism; who, if they did not absolutely deny the existence of the Spirit's operations, held that they accompanied the word by a uniform and insensible influence, which could not be distinguished from the effect of the word. Both these errors were of a dangerous tendency; and it

was exceedingly important, that the true scriptural doctrine of Divine agency should be clearly exhibited, confirmed, and illustrated; and no man was better qualified for such a work, than John Owen.

This work did not escape animadversion. William Clagett, preacher to the honourable Society of Gray's Inn, and one of his Majesty's chaplains, in ordinary, published, "A Discourse concerning the operations of the Holy Spirit, with a confutation of some part of Dr. Owen's book on that subject." The writer aims to show, that Dr. Owen is very ignorant of the meaning of Scripture, and a bungler in reasoning; and that his views of the natural wickedness of man, and of the power of God, in converting him, are much too strong. The sentiments of the work are undisguised Pelagianism, mingled with Arminianism. Dr. Owen when he published the second part of the work on the SPIRIT, anticipated opposition; but gives notice, that whatever might be written, he should make no reply. In the preface to the "Reason of Faith," he says, "Where I differ in any thing, belonging to the subject, from the conceptions of other men, I have candidly examined such opinions and the arguments by which they are confirmed, without straining at the words, cavilling at the expressions, or reflecting on the persons of the authors. And, whereas, I have been otherwise dealt with by many, and know not how soon I

may be so again, I do hereby free the persons of such humours from all fear of any reply from me, or the least notice of what they shall write or say. Such kind of writing is of the same consideration with me, as those multiplied false reports, which some have raised concerning me, the most of them so ridiculous and foolish; so alien from my principles, practice, and course of life, that I cannot but wonder how any persons pretending to gravity and sobriety, are not sensible that their credulity is abused in the hearing and repeating of them." He therefore made no reply to the attack of Clagett; though some others undertook to return him an answer.

The next work which Dr. Owen produced was, "The Nature and Punishment of Apostasy declared, in an Exposition of Heb. vi. 4—6." In the preface to this work, he complains piteously, of the state into which the Christian profession had sunk; that the pristine glory of the Christian Church was gone, and that the great body of those who assumed the name of Christ were degenerated into cold, worldly professors, destitute of the power, and many of them, even of the form of godliness." This work is nothing else than the Exposition of this portion of the epistle to the Hebrews enlarged. He thought the circumstances of the times and the importance of the subject, required a separate treatise. He insists upon it, that apostates

were never, however great their gifts or imposing their profession, of the number of true believers: and while we are called upon, not to be high-minded but fear, "The Lord knoweth them that are his," and will perfect in the day of Christ, what he hath here begun. Those who are desirous of examining this subject fully, will find much valuable instruction and warning, in this work.

On the 28th of January, 1676, Dr. Owen sustained a heavy affliction, in the loss of his wife. He remained a widower, about a year and a half, when again he entered into the married state. His second wife was Mrs. Dorothy D'Oyly, widow of Thomas D'Oyly, Esq. Her original name was Michel, of a family of distinction. She was much younger than the doctor, but had been a widow for several years. She was a woman eminent for her good sense, piety, and affectionate disposition, and brought the doctor a considerable fortune, which with his own estate, and other property, enabled him to keep his carriage and country house, at Ealing, in Middlesex, where he mostly lived, during the latter years of his life. This lady survived Dr. Owen, many years; dying on the 18th of January, 1704. Her funeral sermon was preached by Dr. Watts, on the 30th of the same month.

## CHAPTER XIII.

DURING the last years of his life, Dr. Owen had constantly some person to assist him in his pastoral labours. The persons whom he employed in this service, were not only men of piety, but learning; and usually, men who had suffered for the sake of their principles. The first was, Robert Ferguson, a native of Scotland, who before the restoration had a living in Kent, from which he was ejected. The next of the doctor's assistants was Alexander Shields, also a Scotchman, a man who had suffered much in the cause of God and his country. He was the author of "The Hind let loose," of "Renwick's Life," and, a "Vindication of the Solemn League and Covenant." Among his assistants, Isaac Loeffs, and Samuel Angier are also mentioned: but the most distinguished person, who occupied this station was David Clarkson, who in a short time, became his colleague, and after his death, his successor. Of him, Baxter says, "That he was a divine of extraordinary worth, for solid judgment, healing moderate principles, and a godly upright life." He was also eminent as an author; especially on account of one work, "No evidence of Diocesan Episcopacy in the Primitive Times," in answer to Dr. Stillingfleet. He was also, one of the ejected ministers, under the Bar-

tholomew act of 1662. His funeral sermon was preached by Dr. Bates, in whose works it is published, and contains a beautiful portrait of Mr. Clarkson, which the reader may consult.

About this period a correspondence took place between Dr. Owen and his old tutor Barlow, now a bishop, respecting the case of John Bunyan. This excellent and extraordinary man, more celebrated than most who ever wore a mitre, had suffered long and grievously, from imprisonment, by which the servant, but not the word of the Lord had been bound; as during his confinement he composed those works which have immortalized his name, and diffused most extensively the knowledge of Christ. The law provided that any person imprisoned for non-conformity, might be released, if two persons would enter into a bond that he would conform in six months. A friend of Bunyan requested Dr. Owen to give him a letter of introduction to Bishop Barlow, which he readily did, entreating that this good man might be released. When the letter was delivered to Barlow, he told the bearer, "that he had a particular regard for Dr. Owen, and would deny him nothing which he could legally do; and that he would be willing even to stretch a little to serve him. But this," said he, "is a new thing; I must, therefore, take a little time to consider it; and if, in my power, I will readily do it." When



after some time, he was waited on again, he said, that he had found that he might do it; but as these were critical times, he insisted that an application should be made to the Lord Chancellor, to issue an order to the Bishop to release him. It was alleged that this course would be expensive, and that the man was poor, but he would consent on no other terms, which were at length complied with, and Bunyan set at liberty. This anecdote is taken from Asty's "Memoirs of Owen;" but it is difficult to reconcile it with the chronology of the time; for Bunyan was imprisoned in 1660, and remained twelve or thirteen years in confinement, which would bring his release to the year 1673; but Barlow was not made bishop till 1675. Bunyan might have been twice imprisoned, with an interval between, which would bring it down to the time of Barlow; or there may be some inaccuracy in the dates. It can scarcely be doubted that Owen and Barlow had some hand in this event; for it is mentioned in every account of both Owen and Bunyan. It is said that Owen was in the practice of hearing Bunyan preach, when he visited London, which led Charles II. to express surprise, that a person of Owen's learning could hear a tinker preach. To which Owen is said to have replied, "Had I the tinker's abilities, may it please your majesty, I would most gladly relinquish my learning." Bunyan appears to have been as po-

pular as a preacher, as he is as a writer; and must have had something very attractive in his delivery. In the middle of winter, he would have more than twelve hundred people to hear him in the morning before seven o'clock. And when one day's notice was given of his visit to the metropolis, more people would collect than could be accommodated: sometimes five or six thousand persons.

Barlow being in Owen's company asked him what objection he could have to their liturgical worship. To which he replied, "Means appointed by men for obtaining an end of Christ, exclusive of the means appointed by Christ for attaining that end, are unlawful: but the worship of the liturgy, with all its ceremonies, is a means appointed by men for attaining an end of Christ, namely, the edification of the church, exclusive of the means appointed by Christ for that purpose; therefore, it is unlawful." He urged the argument from Ephesians iv. 8-12. "He gave gifts unto men, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying the body of Christ." The bishop answered, "their ministers might preach and pray." But said the Doctor, "The administration of the sacraments is one principal means of the edification of the church; but the use of the liturgy is exclusive of the exercise of all gifts in the administration of the Lord's Supper." The Bishop paused.

"Don't answer suddenly," said the Doctor, "but think of it till next meeting;" which never occurred.

The latter years of Owen's life were mostly devoted to writing, and the labours of the ministry. He appears to have been frequently laid aside from his public work; but every moment of his retirement must have been employed, as during this period, most of his elaborate performances were published, or prepared for the press.

In 1677, he published "The Reason of Faith," of which we have already spoken, as a part of his work on the Spirit. This year also appeared "The Doctrine of Justification by Faith, through the imputation of the righteousness of Christ, explained, confirmed, and vindicated." This cardinal doctrine, which Luther calls, "*Articulus stantis, vel cadentis Ecclesiae*," has been vehemently opposed ever since the days of Paul. From the degree of clearness and decision with which it is preached, may be inferred the degree in which religion flourishes in any community; and in proportion as it is known and believed, will the religion of an individual be comfortable to himself and acceptable to God. He considered it not at all a doctrine suited to the speculative mind; but where any persons are made sensible of their apostasy from God, of the evils of their natures and lives, with the dreadful consequences that attend thereon, in the wrath of

God, and eternal punishment due to sin, they cannot judge themselves more concerned in any thing, than in the knowledge of the Divine way of deliverance from this condition. For the sake of such persons entirely, he investigates the Divine revelation on this subject, and endeavours to ascertain, how the conscience of a distressed sinner may obtain assured peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ. The doctrine was dear to his own heart, and as he derived from it all his comfort, as a sinner, it constituted the favourite theme of all his public labours. He did not take up the sentiments of other men without examination, but examined the subject for himself, long and profoundly. When men are engaged in the serious inquiry, "What must we do to be saved?" every thing that explains the nature, certainty, and way of deliverance, will be considered of unspeakable moment. In prosecuting this subject, the author does not allow himself to be led away into the mazes of human reasoning, but keeps constantly in view the character of God, as Judge and Lawgiver; the actual condition of man, as a sinner; and the glorious provision made, by the plan of mercy, for securing the honour and harmony of the Divine perfections, in consistency with the salvation of the guilty sinner. He examines the nature and use of faith—the import of the terms justification—imputed righteousness—and the imputation

of sin to Christ. He points out the difference between personal and imputed righteousness; illustrates a number of passages of Scripture, where the subject is treated, and refutes objections against his views. He shows that the doctrine has no evil tendency, but is consistent with living righteously, godly, and soberly in this present world, and proves, that between Paul and James, there is a most perfect agreement.

The principal objection to this work is its size. Considering the object which the writer had in view, he ought to have condensed his thoughts within narrower limits. An anxious inquirer is in danger of losing himself in the multitude of his words, and the variety and prolixity of his discussions. But Owen could more easily expand than contract, and this volume is more fit for an established Christian, who knows how to "distinguish things that differ," than for a bewildered and disheartened sinner, who wishes for a simple answer to the question, "How may I be just before God."

In 1679, appeared "Christologia, or a declaration of the glorious mystery of the person of Christ, God and man, with the infinite wisdom, love and power of God, in the contrivance and constitution of it. As also of the grounds and reasons of his incarnation; the nature of his ministry in heaven; the present state of the church above; and the use of his person in religion. With an ac-

count and vindication of the honour, worship, faith, love, and obedience, due unto him from the Church." The preface to this work contains some historical notices respecting the person of Christ, which had agitated the Church, and of the means which the friends of truth had employed in its defence. Speaking of the councils, called in the fourth century and afterwards for the purpose of declaring the orthodox doctrines, and of healing divisions, he says, "they proved the most pernicious engines for the corruption of the faith, worship, and manners of the Church. Yea, from the beginning, they were so far from being the only way of preserving the truth, that it was almost constantly prejudiced by their authority, for confirming it. Nor was there one of them, in which the mystery of iniquity did not work, unto the laying some rubbish in the foundation of that fatal apostasy, which afterwards openly ensued." Now, while we are as far as Dr. Owen, from believing in the infallibility of ecclesiastical councils; yet we cannot subscribe to this sweeping condemnation of all councils. Some of them, we cannot but think were of important service in placing a bulwark against the inundation of error, if in no other way, at least by showing the general faith of the churches, in every part of the world. We have no doubt that the prevalence of Arianism was checked and retarded by the Council of Nice and other heresies

were also suppressed by the declaration of the true faith of the Church, by assemblies, consisting of the most learned and pious doctors of the Church. Dr. Owen, in this instance, seems to have been too much under the influence of prejudice arising from his preference of Independency.

This entire treatise is founded on Christ's declaration to Peter, Matt. xvi. 18, which the Doctor endeavours to wrest from the persuasion of the papists. He considers it as containing three important truths—'that the person of Christ, the Son of the living God, as vested with his offices, is the foundation of the Church—that the power and policy of hell will be for ever exerted against the relation of the Church to this foundation—but that the Church built on this rock shall never be disjoined from it, or destroyed.' The volume contains much important matter and some beautiful passages, both in the direct discussion of the subject and incidentally introduced. His views of the mediation and glory of Christ in heaven are uncommonly elevated. Losing sight of the refinements of technical theology, he speaks out the feelings of the soul, as one whose faith and hope had long been fixed on that which is within the vail, and whose heart burned with love to that Redeemer, whose presence and glory fill the holiest of all. The immortal life, and unlimited power of Jesus secure the existence of the Church, and encourage the most per-

fect confidence in its future triumphs. Amidst all its declensions and tribulations, its perpetuity has never been endangered; and whatever may be the scenes of its future condition, we know that full provision is made in the scheme of revealed love, for the universality of its establishment on earth, and the eternity of its glory in heaven. "These things," says Dr. Owen, "have not only rendered prisons and dungeons more desirable to the people of God, than the most goodly palaces, on future accounts, but have really made them places of such refreshment and joy as men shall seek in vain to extract out of all the comforts this world can afford."

This great work was followed by a pamphlet of forty seven pages, entitled, "The Church of Rome no Safe Guide; or reasons to prove that no rational man who takes due care of his own salvation, can give himself up to the care of that church, in matters of religion." It was the substance of two discourses preached to a private congregation, and which he published in compliance with the earnest entreaties of some who heard them. Instead of recommending any church as a guide, he advocates the exclusive right of the Holy Scriptures to this office, and points out the extreme danger of men giving themselves up to the blind guidance of the Romish Church. As matters then stood, in the country, a tract of this nature was very necessary, and well calculated to promote the object he



had in view. The Morning Exercise against popery among the Dissenters, had been established for some years. In this he was engaged, and several learned discourses had already been produced, and much good had been done. It is a fact which should be kept in remembrance, that no class of men then opposed so powerful a barrier to the restoration of popery, or so vigorously exerted themselves in defence of the reformed faith, as the protestant Dissenters. Many of the church clergy would have quietly submitted; and although the more respectable class of them felt and owned the services of the Dissenters, to the common cause; yet they afterwards deserted them, or united with the high church party in oppressive measures, to crush them.

This year the Doctor lost his old friend and fellow-labourer, in Oxford, Dr. Thomas Goodwin; the last survivor of the five independent members, of the Westminster Assembly. After the restoration, he lived very privately, in London, where he gathered a church, which now meets in Fetter-lane. He was principally occupied, the last years of his life, in writing books. His works fill five folio volumes. He possessed a most extensive knowledge of Church history, and was deeply skilled in the interpretation of Scripture. He died in the eightieth year of his age, and in his last moments, expressed himself with so much joy, thankfulness, and admiration of

the grace of God, as extremely affected all who heard him.

In 1680, Dr. Owen published another pamphlet, suited to the threatening appearances, as it related to the restoration of popery. It is entitled "Some Considerations about Union among Protestants, and the Preservation of the Protestant religion, in this nation." It contains sound principles, on the subject of the rights and liberties of subjects, and the impropriety of the civil power interfering in matters of religion. "Let the Church," says he "be protected in the exercise of its spiritual power, by *spiritual means only*, as preaching of the word, administration of the sacraments, and the like; whatever further is pretended, as necessary to any of the ends of true religion, or its preservation in the nation, is but a cover for the negligence, idleness, and insufficiency of some of the clergy, who would have an outward appearance of effecting that by force, which themselves by diligent prayer, sedulous preaching of the word, and an exemplary conversation, ought to labour for, in the hearts of men."

In this year, Dr. Owen was involved in a controversy with Stillingfleet, who preached a sermon before the Lord Mayor of London, in which he charged all the Dissenters with the odious crime of Schism. Dr. Owen produced, "A brief vindication of the Non-conformists from the charge of schism, as it was managed against them in a sermon, by Dr.

Stillingfleet." This is a very excellent treatise. He points out the unfairness of charging the Non-conformists with the sin of schism, and their ministers with insincerity. He shows, that the dean's discourse had a tendency to stir up persecution against the Dissenters, of which they had already got quite enough; and very fairly argues with him on the ground which he had taken. Towards the close, he replies to Stillingfleet's advice, "that the Dissenters should not always be complaining of their hardships and persecutions." "After so many of them have died in jail, so many of them endured long imprisonments, not a few being at this time in common durance; so many driven from their habitations, into a wandering condition, to preserve for a while the liberty of their persons; so many have been reduced to want and penury by the taking away their goods, and from some the very instruments of their livelihood; after the prosecutions against them in all courts of justice, of this nation; after so many ministers and their families have been brought into the utmost outward straits, which nature can subsist under; after all their perpetual fears and dangers—they think it hard they should be complained of for complaining, by them who are at ease."

Of this "Vindication," Dr. Stillingfleet said, "Dr. Owen treated me with that civility and decent language, that I cannot but return him thanks for them, though I was far from

satisfied with his reasonings." Baxter who followed Owen, in this controversy, did not treat the dean with so much courtesy: and accordingly he complains of "his anger and unbecoming passion." A third reply was from Mr. John Howe, who, as the dean confessed, "expressed himself more like a well-disposed gentleman, than a divine, without any mixture of rancour, and even with a degree of kindness." Vincent Alsop also came forward and opposed his "*Mischief of Impositions*" to Stillingfleet's *Mischief of Separation*. A fifth antagonist, whom the dean brought upon himself, was Mr. Barret, of Nottingham, who ingeniously compared his *Irenicum* with his late sermon, in a piece, entitled, "The rector of Sutton, committed with the dean of St. Paul's." This seems to have galled the learned dean exceedingly.

In the following year, the Dean took up all his opponents, in the "Unreasonableness of Separation, or an impartial account of the history, nature and pleas of the present separation from the communion of the Church of England; to which are annexed several letters from eminent Protestant divines abroad, concerning the nature of our differences and the way to compose them." This work is characterized by acuteness and research. The historical part of it discovers a minute acquaintance with the sentiments and writings of the early separatists from the Church of England, and with the various views of

the Presbyterian Puritans. His main position is, "If the parish churches are true churches of Christ, why forsake them? If occasional communion may be held with them, why not constant?"

Dr. Owen met him again in reply to this work, in "An answer to the 'Unreasonableness of Separation,' and a defence of the 'Vindication of the Non-conformists from the guilt of schism.'" He avoids all his alternatives, and pushes his adversary to make an election, which must have greatly puzzled him. "Could he maintain that the parish churches of England generally consisted of 'faithful men?' Could he believe that the ministry was generally blameless, and that discipline was faithfully administered; and that no unlawful impositions were laid on the conscience?" The controversy still went on. "More work for the Dean," was the title of a piece published by Mr. Thomas Wall. Mr. Barret also took up his pen a second time. Mr. Lob produced his "Modest and peaceable inquiry," and Mr. Baxter his "Second true defence of the mere Non-conformists;" Mr. Humphrey his "Answer to Dr. Stillingfleet's book," and Mr. Gilbert Rule, his "Rational defence of non-conformity." The Dean did not long remain unrewarded for his zeal for the church, for he was now made bishop: neither was he left to contend alone against such a host. "A presbyter of the Church of England," sup-

posed to be Dr. Sherlock, came forward in a defence of his last work.

The letters from the foreign Protestant divines, which were procured, condemning the course of the Non-conformists, were from Le Moyne, of Leyden, L'Angle, of Charenton, and from the celebrated Claude. The conduct of these divines appeared very inexplicable at the time; and it was not until a volume of Claude's letters was published, long afterwards, that it was fully explained. Stillingfleet had got Compton, Bishop of London, to write to these men, for their opinions of English Presbyterianism. They gave complaisant, but cautious answers. These letters were published by Stillingfleet, as suffrages for Episcopacy, and against non-conformity—a most glaring absurdity. It was a sentence of self-condemnation. M. Claude complained bitterly of this ungenerous treatment; but the letters that contained these complaints were *concealed till his death*, when they were printed by his son. Of the honour and honesty of the course pursued, let the reader judge.

The next work of Dr. Owen was published partly during his life, and partly after his death, and was entitled “An inquiry into the origin, nature, institution, power, order and communion of evangelical churches.” The part which he published in his lifetime, was combined with his answer to Stillingfleet; the second part did not appear till 1688, and was

published by one of his successors, supposed, from the initials I. C., to be Isaac Chauncey. The editor informs us that it was finished by the Doctor, in the midst of great bodily infirmities; but was left ready for the press.

As in this compend of the life of Dr. Owen, we are obliged to study brevity, we have avoided all discussion on the subject of church government. On this subject our views differ, in several respects, from those which he entertained; but in several important points he agreed with the Presbyterians, rather than the Independents. We refer, especially, to his chapter on "Ruling elders," and to his views given in this work, of the importance and authority of synods, when purely ecclesiastical and uncontrolled by the civil power. Mr. Orme, Owen's biographer, from whose work this abridgment has been made, being a zealous Independent, takes much pains to exhibit the Doctor as a thorough-going Independent, and to vindicate him from the charge of conceding any principles which they deem essential to their system. Generally, therefore, on this subject we have omitted his remarks, whilst we have not attempted to conceal Dr. Owen's opinions on this subject. The reader who wishes for full satisfaction on the subject of Dr. Owen's last thoughts on the polity and discipline of the Christian Church, will best find satisfaction by perusing the work now under consideration.

The next work of our indefatigable author's pen, was "A humble testimony to the goodness and severity of God, in his dealing with sinful churches and nations." 1681. It was written at an alarming crisis of the political affairs of the kingdom. "On various accounts," says he, "there are continual apprehensions of public calamities, and all men's thoughts are exercised about the ways of deliverance from them. But as they fix on various means for this end, the conflicts of their counsels and designs increaseth our danger, is likely to prove our ruin." He notices very properly, the interest that ministers ought to feel, not only that their congregations prosper during their lives, but that they might be preserved for future generations; and that it is a great mistake to suppose a church can be injured only by heresy, tyranny and false worship, while a "worldly, corrupt conversation in the generality of its members, may be no less ruinous." The Testimony contains much of that practical wisdom, which the writer had acquired from the word of God, and from his extensive experience in the ways of Providence.

The Testimony was followed by, "The Grace and Duty of being spiritually minded." This is one of the most valuable, and deservedly popular, of all Dr. Owen's publications. It was originally the subject of his private meditations, during a period, when he was laid aside from his public labours;



and when he little expected that he should have the opportunity of doing any more in this world. After his recovery, he delivered the substance of his private meditations to his congregation; and finally committed them to the press. This work is still so much read by Christians and generally so well known, that it will be unnecessary, further to describe it.

In 1683, he published a quarto pamphlet of forty pages; "A Brief and Impartial Account of the Protestant Religion; its present state in the world; its strength and weakness." In this tract, he points out the grounds of Protestantism as contained in the Bible; examines the danger to which it is exposed, from a general defection, from the operation of force, or from a reconciliation with Rome. While he intimates his fears, he at the same time states the grounds of confidence; such as, the honour of Christ to maintain his own cause; the remnant of his people found among the nations; and the magnanimous spirit by which they were actuated.

The last work of Doctor Owen's pen, was, "Meditations and Discourses on the Glory of Christ." This volume was committed to the press, on the very day of his death. It contains two parts; the first, treats of the Person, Office, and Grace of Christ; the second, which did not appear until 1691, consists of an application of the truths in the

former, to sinners, and declining believers. There has been remarked a striking similarity between these meditations, and the 'Dying Thoughts' of Baxter. However these two excellent and eminent men might differ in some of their opinions respecting particular doctrines, or the form of church polity, established in the gospel; and however little cordiality they felt for each other; yet they were evidently men of the same spirit. They were both men of great intellectual strength, and of uncommon spirituality. They both laboured hard for the good of the Church, the conversion of souls, and the edification of the people of God. And at the close of life, they both gave themselves up to holy meditation on those objects which alone deserve the affections of men. No doubt both of them had their defects of Christian character; but we have neither the capacity nor wish to scrutinize their failings, or compare and balance their virtues. Seldom have two such men lived in the same age; and seldom have any been privileged to do so much good after their death, by their writings. These continue to be read with as much profit, as when first published: at least this is the fact in regard to their most practical, and useful productions. The fault of both of them as authors was, that they wrote too much, and did not take sufficient pains to condense their thoughts, and to give more method and perspicuity to their dis-

courses. In diligence they appear to have been equal; in ardour of zeal and eloquence of style, Baxter has the precedence; but in profound, spiritual, and correct views of truth, Owen has an undoubted and great superiority.

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## CHAPTER XIV.

THE health of Dr. Owen appears to have been much broken, for several years, before his death: the cause of which was readily to be found in his intense and unwearied application, the fruits of which appear in his numerous and elaborate writings; and in his anxious solicitude respecting the interests of his Master's Kingdom. These were sufficient to destroy the vigour of any constitution. He was troubled with several painful diseases, particularly with the asthma and stone. By these disorders, he was often confined to his house, and prevented from preaching; but they seem to have interfered very little with his writing; otherwise so many elaborate works could not have been composed by him, in the latter years of his life. While tried with these painful afflictions, he experienced much sympathy from his Christian friends. He had frequent in-

visitations to the country residences of persons of quality; and particularly, to that of Lord Wharton, at Woburn in Buckinghamshire. While occasionally at the seat of this benevolent and Christian nobleman, he was often visited by persons of rank, and enjoyed the company of many of his Christian brethren, in the ministry, who resorted to this hospitable mansion. From this house, he wrote, during one of his severe attacks, a letter to the church, so characteristic of the man, and so suitable to the circumstances of the times, and of his people, that it will not be displeasing to the reader to have it inserted here, entire.

“Beloved in the Lord,

“Mercy, grace, and peace be multiplied to you, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, by the communication of the Holy Ghost. I thought and hoped that by this time, I might be present with you, according to my desire and resolution; but it has pleased our holy, gracious Father otherwise to dispose of me, at least for a season. The continuance of my painful infirmities and the increase of my weaknesses, will not allow me, at present, to hope, that I should be able to bear the journey. How great an exercise this is to me, considering the season, He knows, to whose will I would in all things cheerfully submit myself. But although I am absent from you in the body, I am in

mind, affection, and spirit, present with you, and in your assemblies; for I hope you will be found my crown and rejoicing in the day of the Lord; and my prayer for you, night and day is, that you may stand fast in the whole will of God, and maintain the beginning of your confidence firm unto the end. I know it is needless for me at this distance to write to you about what concerns you in point of duty at this season; that work being well supplied by my brother in the ministry. You will give me leave, out of my abundant affection towards you, to bring some few things to your remembrance, as my weakness will permit.

“In the first place, I pray God, it may be rooted and fixed in our minds, that the shame and loss we may undergo for the sake of Christ and the profession of the gospel, is the greatest honour which in this life we can be made partakers of: so it was esteemed, by the apostles. They rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name’s sake. It is a privilege superadded to the grace of faith which all are not made partakers of. Hence it was reckoned to the Philippians, in a peculiar manner, that it was given unto them, not only to believe in Christ, but also to suffer for him: that it is far more honourable to suffer with Christ, than to reign with the greatest of his enemies. If this be fixed by faith in our minds, it will tend greatly to our encouragement. I

mention these things only, as knowing that they are more at large pressed on you.

“The next thing I would recommend to you, at this season, is, the increase of mutual love among yourselves; for every trial of our faith towards our Lord Jesus, is also a trial of our love towards the brethren. This is that which the Lord Christ expects from us, namely, that when the hatred of the world doth openly manifest and act itself against us all, we should evidence an active love among ourselves. If there have been any decays, any coldness herein, if they are not recovered, in such a season, it never can be expected. I pray God, therefore, that your mutual love may abound in all the fruits and effects of it, more and more towards the whole society and every member thereof. You may justly measure the fruit of your present trial by the increase of this grace among you. In particular have a due regard to the weak and tempted; that that which is lame may not be turned out of the way, but rather let it be healed. Furthermore, brethren, I beseech you, hear a word of advice, in case the persecution increases, which it is like to do for a season. I could wish that because you have no ruling elders, and your teachers cannot walk about publicly with safety, you would appoint some, among yourselves, who may continually, as their occasions will admit, go up and down, from house to house, and apply themselves particularly to the weak,

the tempted, the fearful, and those that are ready to despond, or to halt, and to encourage them in the Lord. Choose out those to this end, who are endued with a spirit of courage and fortitude; and let them know that they are happy whom Christ will honour with this blessed work; and I desire the persons may be of this number who are faithful men, and know the state of the church. By this means you will know what is the frame of the members of the church, which will be a great direction to you even in your prayers. Watch now brethren, that if it be the will of God, not one soul may be lost from under your care. Let no one be overlooked or neglected. Consider all their conditions, and apply yourselves to all their circumstances.

“Finally, brethren, that I be not at present further troublesome to you, examine yourselves, as to your spiritual benefit which you have received, or do receive, by your present fears and dangers, which will alone give you the true measure of your condition. For if this tends to the exercise of your faith and love and holiness—if this increases your valuation of the privileges of the Gospel, it will be an undoubted token of the blessed issue which the Lord Christ will give unto your troubles. Pray for me as you do, and do it the rather, that if it be the will of God, I may be restored to you; and if not, that a blessed entrance may be given unto me into

the kingdom of God and glory. Salute all the church in my name. I take the boldness in the Lord to subscribe myself

Your unworthy Pastor,  
And your servant for Jesus' sake.

J. OWEN.

P. S. I humbly desire that you would remember in your prayers, the family where I am, from whom I have received, and do receive, great Christian kindness. I may say as the apostle, of Onesiphorus, the Lord give to them, that they may find mercy of the Lord in that day, for they have often refreshed me in my great distress."

His increasing infirmities requiring a fixed residence in the country, he took a house at Kensington where he resided for some time. During this period, as he was travelling in his carriage, it was seized by two informers. This must have been a painful occurrence to a person in his state of health which could ill bear the agitation of such an interference. It providentially happened, however, that Sir Edmund Bury Godfrey, a justice of the peace, was passing at the time, and seeing a carriage stopped and a mob collected, inquired into the matter. He ordered the informers and Dr. Owen to meet in Bloomsbury square, on another day, when the cause should be tried. In the mean time the Doctor was discharged; and when the meeting took place, it was found



that the informers had acted so illegally, that they were severely reprimanded and the business dismissed.

An attempt was made about this time, when Dr. Owen had his thoughts almost entirely directed to another world, to involve him and other dissenting ministers, in what was called the Rye-house Plot; in which neither he nor they had the least concern, but on account of which some innocent persons were ruined.

From Kensington, Dr. Owen removed to Ealing, a few miles further into the country, where he had some property and a house of his own; and where he was destined to finish his course. Of his state of mind, in the near view of eternity, we might be well satisfied by the character of the works which then proceeded from his pen. Anthony Wood, who seldom lets an opportunity slip of speaking disrespectfully of Dr. Owen, says, without the slightest authority, "that he did very unwillingly lay down his head and die." The falsehood of this reproach will sufficiently appear, from the following letter addressed to his intimate friend, Sir Charles Fleetwood, the day before his death.

"Although I am unable to write one word myself, yet I am very desirous to speak one word more to you in this world, and do it by the hand of my wife. The continuance of your entire kindness, knowing what it is accompanied with, is not only greatly valued

by me, but will be a refreshment to me as it is even in my dying hour. I am going to Him whom my soul has loved, or rather who has loved me with an everlasting love, which is the whole ground of all my consolation. The passage is very irksome and wearisome, through strong pains of various sorts, which are all issued in an intermitting fever. All things were provided to carry me to London, to-day, according to the advice of my physicians; but we are all disappointed by my utter disability to undertake the journey. I am leaving the ship of the church, in a storm; but while the great Pilot is in it, the loss of a poor under-rower will be inconsiderable. Live, and pray, and hope, and wait patiently, and do not despond; the promise stands invincible that he will never leave us nor forsake us. I am greatly afflicted at the distempers of your dear lady; the good Lord stand by and support and deliver her. My affectionate respects to her, and the rest of your relations, who are so dear to me in the Lord. Remember your dying friend with all fervency—I rest upon it that you do so, and am yours entirely.”

This letter exhibits the ground of his hope, the tranquillity of his mind, the humility of his disposition, his interest in the afflictions of the church, and confidence in her security; his attachment to his friends, and the pleasure which he derived from the fellowship of their kindness and prayers. It is just such a

letter as we might have expected from the preceding life and character of the writer.

His sufferings, previously to his death, appear to have been uncommonly severe, arising from the natural strength of his constitution, and the complication of his maladies. But the truth which he had long preached to the edification and comfort of many, and in defence of which he had written so much and so ably, proved fully adequate, not only to support him but to make him triumph in the prospect of eternity.

On the morning of the day on which he died, the Rev. William Payne, an eminent dissenting minister and tutor, who had been intrusted with the publication of his "Meditations on the Glory of Christ," called to take his leave, and to inform him that he had been just putting that work to the press. "I am glad to hear it," said the dying Christian, and lifting up his hands and eyes, as if transported with joy, exclaimed, "But, O! brother Payne, the long wished for day is come at last, in which I shall see that glory in another manner than I have ever done, or was capable of doing in this world."

His death took place on the 24th of August, 1683, the anniversary of the celebrated Bartholomew ejection, and in the sixty-seventh year of his age. He was speechless several hours before he expired; but showed by the lifting up of his eyes and hands, with great devotion, that he retained the use of

his mental faculties and his devotional feelings to the last. "Mark the perfect-man and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace." "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord; they rest from their labours, and their works do follow them."

From Ealing, where he died, his body was conveyed to a house in St. James's, where it lay some time. On the 4th of September, it was conveyed to Bunhill-fields, attended by the carriages of sixty-seven noblemen and gentlemen, besides many mourning coaches and persons on horseback. Such a testimony to the memory of a man, who died destitute of court and church favour; who had been often abused by the sycophants of tyranny, and the enemies of religion, and at a time when it was dangerous to take part with the persecuted non-conformists, was equally honourable to the dead and the living. He was doubtless dear to many, whom he had instructed by his preaching, and comforted by his writings. They must have sorrows over the grave which closed upon the remains of a valuable and most devoted servant of Christ; but their sorrow would be mingled with joy, when they reflected on his deliverance, and indulged the sure and certain hope of his resurrection to eternal life. He, indeed, left the church in a storm, when there were few, comparatively, who cared for her state; but he entered into rest, and she, in a few years, received deliverance and

repose. How would he have exulted had he lived to see the revolution, and enjoyed for a time, the happy effects of that long and arduous struggle, in which the country had been engaged; and in which he and his brethren bore so prominent a part. They were honoured to sustain the burden and heat of the day, while others repose with comfort in the shade. They fought the battle, and their successors reap the fruit of the victory. They, however, will have their due reward, when the reproach of the world and the abuse of party prejudice will be for ever destroyed, by the applauding approbation of the righteous Judge

On the Lord's day after the funeral, a sermon was preached by his brother and colleague, Mr. Clarkson, from Philippians iii. 21. "Who shall change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body." The discourse is short but consolatory. The last paragraph is solemn and affecting. "His death falleth heaviest and most directly upon this congregation. We had a light in this candlestick, which did not only enlighten the room, but gave light to others far and near; but it is put out. We did not sufficiently value it. I wish I might not say, that our sins have put it out. We had a special honour and ornament, such as other churches would much prize, but the crown has fallen from our heads, yea, may I not add, 'Woe unto us, for we have sinned.' We have lost

an excellent pilot, and lost him when a fierce storm is coming on us. I dread the consequences, considering the weakness of those who are left at the helm. If we are not sensible of it, it is because our blindness is great. Let us beg of God, that he would prevent what this threatens us with; and that he would make up this loss, or that it may be repaired. And let us pray in the last words of this dying person to me, 'That the Lord would double his Spirit upon us; that he would not remember against us former iniquities; but that his tender mercies may speedily prevent us, for we are brought very low.' "

Doctor Owen left no child behind him, his daughter having died the year before him. His estate was left by his will to his brother, Henry Owen, who, however, died before him, and it fell to his son.

His library, which was valuable, was sold by Millington. It contained some valuable Greek manuscripts, which he had obtained with the library of Patrick Young, better known by his Latin name Junius, who was one of the most learned men of the age.

A monument of freestone was erected over his body in Bunhill-fields, on which was inscribed a Latin epitaph, drawn up by his old friend Thomas Gilbert.

Dr. Owen was tall in stature, and toward the latter part of his life inclined to stoop. He had a grave, majestic countenance; but

the expression was sweet, rather than austere. His appearance and deportment were those of a gentleman, and therefore much suited to the situations which he was called to fill. Several portraits of him have been executed, all of which though executed at different times, exhibit a considerable resemblance to each other.

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## CONCLUSION.

### CHARACTER OF DR. OWEN.

ONE of the first and most prominent traits in the character of Dr. Owen, was, his constant recognition of the supreme authority of the word of God, in all matters of religion. Under the influence of this principle he was led, at an early period of his life, to renounce all thoughts of rising in the Episcopal hierarchy. The same views led him to connect himself with the Independents, then the least considerable, and least respected body of dissenters. "To the law and to the testimony," as he understood them, he submitted his conscience, and to no other authority. Where they pointed the way, he felt it his duty to follow: what they called him to bear, he willingly sustained. The path was often rugged, and the burden heavy; but the love

of Christ always smoothed the one, and enabled him to bear the other. With a conscience alive to every precept of the sacred word, and a heart filled with gratitude to its Divine Author, all things were felt to be easy; and he experienced what all who imitate his example will find, that the path of duty, even when it leads through tribulation, is the path of safety and comfort.

With conscientious obedience, in Dr. Owen, was associated deep humility of disposition. Possessed of eminent talents, and great enlargement of mind; placed in the most dignified and often envied stations; consulted, applauded, and courted by authority, learning, and rank, he could not be altogether unconscious of his own superiority. Yet this very rarely appears. There was little of pride or overbearing in his manner. The tendency of his honours and talents to elate him, was counteracted by his deep insight into the character of God, and the depth of corruption in his own heart. He had been deeply humbled by the convictions of the divine law, and his knowledge of the gospel increased his impressions of the malignity of sin. Instead of comparing himself with others, he habitually viewed his character and its defects, in the light of God's perfect law. Conscious of innumerable imperfections, which were unperceived by men, he walked before God, as a sinner, constantly dependent on sovereign mercy to cover



his transgressions, and a gracious influence to perfect his obedience. "What have I that I have not received?" seems to have been habitually in his mind.

In his private manners, he was very affable and courteous, familiar, and sociable. The meanest persons found easy access to his conversation and advice. He was facetious and pleasant in his common discourse, but with due regard to sobriety and moderation. He had a great command over his passions, especially that of anger. His temper was remarkably even and serene; neither elated with honour, credit, friends, or estate; nor easily depressed with opposition, troubles, and difficulties.

He combined, in an unusual degree, love to all the people of God, with a firm attachment to his own peculiar sentiments. He walked according to the light which he had received, and loved those who minded the same things; but his benedictions extended to all the true Israel of God. He was, ever, a devoted friend to truth; but a lover of many who did not see the whole truth; and he only pitied and prayed for those who opposed it. Like Melancthon, he contended for unity in those truths which are necessary to be believed, for liberty in those things which God has left free, and for love to all who bear the image of Christ. He was of great moderation in his judgment, willing to think the best of all men as far as he could; not cen-

sorious, but a lover of piety wherever exhibited; not confining Christianity to any one party, and ever endeavouring to promote it among men of all denominations.

Unwearied diligence in his Christian profession is another characteristic of Dr. Owen. He was a passionate lover of knowledge, especially of Divine truth. This object he pursued unweariedly, through painful and wasting studies; by which ultimately his health and strength were greatly impaired; and by which those diseases were contracted which terminated his life. His laborious diligence in study needs no other proof than the number and character of his writings; to which were added constant labours in the pulpit, as long as his strength permitted.

But the most conspicuous trait in Dr. Owen's character, was a deep, spiritual tone of mind. The principal ingredient in all his practical works is *spirituality*. In this he was superior to most men of his age; and few since have reached the spiritual stature to which he attained. His eminence in this temper of mind is the more remarkable, when it is considered in what circumstances he was placed the greater part of his life. He did not live as an ascetic, in retirement from the world, nor at a time when the olive branch of peace was suspended over the land. He did not study how he could most quietly creep through the world. His circumstances and manner of life were the very reverse of these.

He mixed much with the world; moved even among the great of the earth, and often stood before the powers and principalities of the land. Many of his best days were spent in the midst of the noise of camps, the bickerings of party, and the heat of controversy. In all these circumstances the soul of Owen remained unmoved; in the land of peace and in the swellings of Jordan, he maintained an undeviating spiritual career. Superior to the influence of external things, his feelings and pursuits often exhibit an extraordinary contrast with his external situation. While governing the contending spirits of Oxford, conflicting with the turbulent elements of the commonwealth, and discussing the intricacies of the Arminian and Socinian controversies, he wrote on the "Mortification of Sin," and "Communion with God." While struggling with oppression, and sometimes concealing himself for safety, he produced his Exposition of the one hundred and thirtieth Psalm, and his great work on the Hebrews. When racked with the stone, and "in deaths oft," he composed his "Defence of Evangelical Churches," and his "Meditations on the Glory of Christ." The secret of this enviable attainment is to be looked for in the extraordinary measure of divine influence which he enjoyed. This produced a life of faith, self-denial, and of heavenly tranquillity. The mortification of sin which he described, was what he himself practiced. This description

of the nature and excellence of communion with God, is a view of his own enjoyments. And the spiritual-mindedness which he inculcates, was no mere theory, but copied from his own daily experience. His mouth spoke from the abundance of his heart; that which he had himself experienced, he wished to communicate to others. "He set the Lord always before him," which delivered him from the fear of man, and enabled him to act the part of a faithful minister of Christ. When *contending* for the faith, he remembered that "the servant of the Lord must not strive, but with meekness, instruct those who oppose themselves." When surrounded by the pomps and vanities of the world, he thought of their fading nature, and of the superior glory of the "better and more enduring inheritance." When struggling with the tribulations of the kingdom, he rejoiced in the rest that remaineth for the people of God. When reviled and exposed to the strife of tongues, he comforted himself with the gracious declaration of the Lord, "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my name's sake." When fainting with weakness and dissolving in death, the thoughts of heaven and of him who occupies the throne, filled him with "joy unspeakable and full of glory."

As a minister of Christ, his character and qualifications stand pre-eminent. Of these

it is unnecessary now to speak, except to remark that his talents, as a public speaker, were of the first order. His voice was strong, but not noisy; sweet, but exceedingly manly, with a certain sound of authority in it. His gesture was dignified and proper, very far removed from theatrical affectation. His personal appearance powerfully aided his advantages of voice; and all were supported by a presence of mind which seldom forsook him, even in the most trying circumstances. Even Anthony Wood, not disposed to be partial to Dr. Owen, and who knew him personally at Oxford, is constrained to admit "that Owen was a person well skilled in the tongues, rabbinical learning, and Jewish rites and customs." And as to his appearance as a preacher, the same writer says, "that his personage was proper and comely, and he had a very graceful behaviour in the pulpit; an eloquent elocution; a winning and insinuating deportment; and could, by the persuasion of his oratory, move and wind the affections of his audience almost as he pleased." He seldom used notes in the pulpit; he was never at a loss for language. He possessed an admirable facility of discoursing on any subject with decency and propriety; and could better express his ideas extempore, than most others after premeditation. His published sermons are by no means unfavourable specimens of his pulpit talents. Those redundancies of which we complain in

reading, must have been more tolerable in their delivery. Though diffuse and prolix, he was often energetic. He was evidently careless about the dress of his ideas; in this we are of opinion that he made a great mistake, which has operated to prevent his writings from being useful to that extent to which otherwise they might have been, had they been in a more inviting style. We have often known persons of some intelligence, who had no prejudice against Dr. Owen's theological opinions, so perplexed and dissatisfied with his style of composition, that they could never be induced to take the pains to understand any of his elaborate treatises.

As a pastor he was indefatigable in his care and instruction of the flock; and his ministry must have been very edifying to the pious, as his instructions were of the most spiritual and practical kind. His attention to the young is also manifest from the catechisms which he composed for their benefit. As many persons of rank or superior intelligence belonged to his flock, he was, by his extensive learning, his dignified eloquence, and his polite and affable manners, peculiarly adapted to have the oversight of such; but he was "condescending also to men of low estate."

But it is as a writer that we are most interested in Dr. Owen, and on this subject we have had occasion to speak more than once already. And as we have given some parti-

cular account of all his important works, it will be unnecessary here to attempt to characterize him as a theological writer. As his influence was extensive while he lived, both at home and on the Continent, so he has had a powerful influence in forming the theology of after times. Among the Dissenters his writings have ever been considered standard works; and they have also been held in high estimation by the evangelical portion of the Church of England; and no where have they been more read and prized than among the Presbyterians of Scotland and of the United States of America. His excellence as a theological writer does not consist in the discovery of new doctrines; to any thing of this kind he made no pretensions. He inquired for the "old paths," and was satisfied to walk in them. He never deviates, in the least, from the Calvinistic doctrines, which all the Reformers at first received. He affected no singularity, but was set for the explanation and defence of the faith which the orthodox church had already received.

As a controversial writer, Dr. Owen, was generally distinguished for calmness, acuteness, candour, and a gentlemanly treatment of his opponents. He lived in a stormy period, and often experienced the bitterest provocation; but he very seldom betrays any want of good temper. He often handled the arguments of his adversaries roughly, but he

always saved their persons, and feelings, as much as possible. Wood admits this. "He was," says he, "one of the fairest and most genteel of the writers who appeared against the Church of England, handling his adversaries with far more civil, decent, and temperate language, than many of his fiery brethren." Stillingfleet acknowledged, that he treated him "with civility and decent language." Dodwell, also says, "that he was of a better temper than most of his brethren." And even Richard Baxter, who had so often been embroiled with Owen in controversy, after his decease, speaks respectfully and kindly of him. "I doubt not," says he, "he was a man of rare parts and worth. That book of Communion is an excellent treatise; and his great volumes on the Hebrews do all show his great learning. It was his strange error, if he thought that freedom from a liturgy, would have made most, or many ministers, like himself as free, and fluent, and copious of expression . . . If this excellent man had one mistake; yet he was of late years of more complying mildness, and sweetness, and peaceableness than ever before, or than many others. I doubt not but his soul is now with Christ, where there is no darkness, no mistakes, no separation of Christ's members from one another."

In examining the practical writings of such men as Hall, Taylor, and Tillotson, we miss that rich vein of evangelical sentiment, and



that constant reference to the living principles of Christianity, which are never lost sight of in Owen. They abound, it is true, in excellent directions, and in rich materials for self-examination, and self-government, but they do not state with sufficient accuracy, the connexion between gracious influence, and its practical results, from which all that is excellent in human conduct must proceed. While others are attentive to the faults or excellencies of the outward man, he devotes himself chiefly to the sins and enjoyments of the inner man; illustrating at the same time, how they regulate the conduct. He uniformly begins with the grand principles of Christian action, and traces them from their source in the sovereign love of the Redeemer, through all their windings in human experience, examining all that retards, and noticing all that promotes their progress:—showing how they fertilize the soil through which they flow, with the fruits of righteousness, and finally return in the incense of grateful praise to the atmosphere of heaven.

OWEN, GOODWIN, BAXTER and HOWE, were the four leading men among the non-conformist worthies. But however each of the others might excel the subject of this memoir, in some one or more particulars; yet there is little danger of mistake in assigning the foremost place to Dr. Owen. As a theologian, in learning, and in profound, discriminating, and accurate views of the system

of revealed truth he was superior to them all; and we do not know that any theologian has since risen in the Christian Church, who ought to bear away the palm from JOHN OWEN.

THE END.

**THE LIFE**

**OF THE**

**REV. JOHN JANEWAY.**

**ABRIDGED FOR THE BOARD.**

**PHILADELPHIA:**

**PRESBYTERIAN BOARD OF PUBLICATION.**

**JAMES RUSSELL, PUBLISHING AGENT.**

**1840.**

Entered according to the act of Congress, in the year 1840, by A. W.  
MITCHELL, in the office of the Clerk of the District Court for the  
Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

PHILADELPHIA.  
WILLIAM S. MARTIN, PRINTER.

## LIFE OF REV. JOHN JANEWAY.

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JOHN JANEWAY was born at Lilley, in Hertfordshire, October 27, 1633. The early part of his education was received at St. Paul's School, London, under the tuition of the excellent Mr. Langley, where he made great progress in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew; also in mathematics and astronomy. Afterwards, he was sent to Eton college, where the eyes of many were upon him, as the glory of the school, and the wonder of the age. At the age of seventeen he entered King's College, Cambridge, when the electors contended for the patronage of so admirable a youth. He became afterwards a fellow of this college.

Besides his eminence in learning, he was distinguished for the amiableness of his disposition, and the urbanity of his manners: and although he was so much admired and caressed, he did not manifest the least vanity or pride. His learning was mixed with much modesty and diffidence. He was also

remarkable for sobriety and prudence; and was preserved from the vices and dissipations, into which youth so frequently fall. But at this time he felt no concern about religion and the salvation of his soul. But when about eighteen years of age, by reading Baxter's "Saint's Everlasting Rest," he was brought under deep conviction of sin. The change which now took place soon became manifest to all. His whole soul seemed to be absorbed in the pursuit of salvation; and he now began to taste the sweetness of studying the mind of God in his word; and was most concerned to please and enjoy him for ever. He pitied those who were curious in their inquiries into almost every thing, except the knowledge of themselves and Jesus Christ. He did not look upon human learning as useless, but exceedingly profitable, when suitably employed; but when not rendered subservient to the cause and glory of Christ, he considered it as a sword in the hand of a madman.

Mr. Janeway began now to consider how he could most effectually express his love and thankfulness to God, 'who had called him out of darkness into his marvellous light.' He, therefore, addressed many letters to his relations and friends, which were more like the productions of mature age, than of a person so young. He could not help announcing to others what he had seen and felt. To plead the cause of God, to exalt his dear

Redeemer, and to bring sinners to Christ, was the only object he had in view; but his gravity, majesty, and pathos of style, can only be known by his own words.

Before he had reached his nineteenth year, in writing to his father, who was labouring under great distress of mind, he says, "The cause of your desponding and melancholy thoughts, give me leave with submission to conjecture, may be, first, your entering the ministry, without that reverence, care, and holy zeal for God, love to Christ, and compassion for souls, which is required of every one who undertakes that holy office. Be this as it may, as has been stated, or worse, the remedy is the same. These reflections have a wounding power, which will be felt to be grievous; but continual sorrow and sad thoughts keep the wound open too long, and are not available to produce a cure. Wounds must indeed first be opened that they may be cleansed. They must be opened that their filth may be discovered, in order to their being purged and healed; but no longer than till the balm of Gilead is applied, that they may be healed. When Christ is made use of aright, he leaveth joy and comfort; yet a constant humility of spirit is no way inconsistent with this peace with God.

"A second cause of your heaviness may be the state of the people committed to your care. And, indeed, who can help mourning over a people in such a condition? Objects

of pity they are, especially because they pity not themselves. I have often wrestled with God to direct you in the path of duty concerning them, which I am persuaded is your request also. Now after seriously examining yourself, what your conscience doth conclude to be your duty, do it; you are then to rest upon God for his effectual working. And this should no more be the cause of heaviness to you, than the opposition which the apostles met with, was to them.

“You may have some thoughts and cares concerning your family when you are gone. Let faith and former experience teach you to drive away all such thoughts. Your disposition and solitary habits may also be some cause of melancholy. But there is a duty which, if properly observed, would dispel all. This is heavenly meditation, and the contemplation of those things to which the Christian religion tends. If we walk close with God in this duty, only one hour in the day, Oh, what an influence would it have on the whole day; and if duly performed, on the whole life. I knew the nature and usefulness of this duty before, but had it more deeply impressed on my mind from reading Baxter’s “Saint’s Everlasting Rest,” for which I have cause for ever to bless God.

“As for your dear wife, I fear that the cares and the troubles of the world take off her mind from walking closely with God, and



from earnest endeavours after higher degrees of grace. I commend God unto her, and this excellent duty of meditation to all. It is a bitter sweet: bitter to corrupt nature, but sweet to the regenerate part. I entreat her and yourself, yea, I charge it upon you, with all humility and tenderness, that God have at least half an hour in the day allowed him for this exercise. Oh, this most precious, soul-reviving, soul-ravishing, soul-perfecting duty! Take this from your dear friend, as spoken with reverence, faithfulness, and love.

“One more direction let me give. See that none in your family, satisfy themselves in family prayer, without drawing near to God, twice a day in secret. Here secret wants may be laid open. Here great mercies may be begged with great earnestness. Here the wandering and coldness in family duty may be repented of, and amended. This is the way to get sincerity, seriousness, and cheerfulness in religion. Thus the joy of the Lord will be your strength. Let those who know their duty do it. If any think it is unnecessary, let them fear lest they lose that most excellent help to a holy, useful, and joyful life.

“Take some of these directions from sincere affection; some from my own experience; and all from a compassionate desire for your joy and comfort. The Lord teach you in this and in the rest. I entreat you never to rest until you have attained to true spiritual

peace and joy in the Lord. The God of peace afford you his direction, with the foretastes of his comforts in this life, and the perfection of them in the enjoyment of his excellency and holiness, through Jesus Christ."

When only twenty years of age, Mr. Janeway became fellow of his college.

Besides the above judicious and pious letter to his father, he wrote many pathetic letters to his brothers, followed by his prayers and tears for a blessing. He often addressed them, personally, in private conversation, when he earnestly recommended Christ, and affectionately urged them to seek an interest in him. And then his pious efforts were not in vain. He was supposed to have been the spiritual father of his own natural father, and several of his brothers; who will have cause to bless God through eternity, that they ever received his instructions. In a letter addressed to his brothers, he writes, "Distance of place cannot lessen that natural bond, whereby we are one blood; neither ought it to lessen our love. Nay, where true love is, it cannot. Respecting my love to you, I can only say, that I feel it better than I can express it. But love felt and not expressed is little worth. I desire, therefore, to make my love manifest, in the best way I can. Let us look on one another, not as brethren only, but as members of the same body of which Christ is the Head. Happy day will that be, when the Lord will

manifest this union. Let us therefore breathe, and hunger after this, that so we may all meet in Christ. If we be in Christ, and Christ in us, we shall be one in each other.

“You cannot complain of the want of instruction. God hath not been to us as the dry and barren wilderness. You have had line upon line, and precept upon precept. He hath planted you by the rivers of waters. It is, indeed, the Lord alone, who maketh fruitful; yet we are not to stand still, and do nothing. There is a crown worth seeking, to obtain. Seek then by earnest, constant prayer. Keep your souls in a praying frame. This is a great and necessary duty; yea, a very great privilege. If you can say nothing, come and lay yourselves, in humility before the Lord. Through mercy I have experienced what I say, that there is more sweetness to be got in one glimpse of God’s love, than in all that the world can afford. O! do but try. Oh taste and see how good the Lord is.

“Beg of God to make you sensible of your lost and undone state by nature, and of the excellency and necessity of Christ. Say unto God, ‘Let me be any thing in the world, if I may be enabled to value Christ, and be persuaded to accept of him as he is offered in the gospel. Oh, that I may be delivered from the wrath to come! Oh, for a blessing for me, even for me!’ Resolve not to give it up until the Lord hath in some mea-

sure satisfied you. Oh, my bowels yearn towards you. My heart works. Oh, that you did but know with what affections I write unto you now, and what prayers and tears have been mingled with these lines! The Lord set these things home, and give you a heart to apply them to yourselves.

“Give me leave to come nearer to you, and to deal plainly with you. I love your souls so well, that I cannot bear the thoughts of their being lost. Know this, that there is such a thing as the new birth: ‘Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of heaven.’ This new birth hath its foundation laid in a sense of sin, in a godly sorrow for it, and a heart set against it. Without this there can be no salvation. Look well to yourselves. You will see that you are in hell’s mouth; and nothing but free grace and pure mercy is between you and a state of damnation. The Lord deliver from a secure and careless heart. Here you see a natural man’s condition. How dare you then lie down in security. O look to God for your soul’s sake. Without repentance there is no remission of sin; and repentance itself will lose its labour, if it be not of the right kind. Prayers; and groans and tears will not do without Christ. Most persons, when they are made in some measure sensible of their sins, and are under the fears of hell, run to duty, and reform some things, and thus the wound is healed; by which

means, thousands fall short of heaven. For if we be not brought off from trusting in ourselves, and from our own righteousness, as well as from our sins, we are never likely to be saved. We must see our absolute need of Christ, give ourselves up unto him, and count all things but dross and dung in comparison with his righteousness. Look therefore for God's mercy in Christ alone.

“The terms of the gospel are, **REPENT** and **BELIEVE**. Gracious terms! Mercy for fetching! Mercy for receiving! Do you desire the grace and mercy of God? I know you do; and even this desire is the gift of God. Hunger after Christ. Let your desires put you upon endeavours. The work itself is sweet. Yea, mourning and repentance have more sweetness in them than all the comforts of this world. Upon repentance and believing comes justification; and afterwards sanctification by the Spirit dwelling in us. By this we become the children of God, are made partakers of the Divine nature, and lead new lives. It is unworthy of a Christian to have such a narrow spirit, as not to act for Christ with all his heart, soul, and strength. Be not ashamed of Christ; nor afraid of the frowns of the wicked. Be sure to keep a conscience void of offence, and yield by no means to any known sin. Be much in secret prayer, and in reading the Scriptures. My greatest desire is, that God would work his own work in you.”

Such was the spirit of his letters addressed to his brothers. In the same spirit he used every other means of instruction. He often visited them alone, and faithfully addressed each. On one of these visits, he observed, that one of his brothers slept at family prayer. He embraced an early opportunity of showing him the greatness of his sin, and the just desert of such contempt of God; and it pleased God to make this reproof like a dagger to the heart of his brother; and though then only eleven years of age, there is good ground to believe, that it was the means of his conversion. The change produced in this young brother afforded him much comfort and encouragement. In writing to this brother he says, "I hope God hath a good work to do in you, for you, and by you; yea, I hope he hath already begun the work. But oh, take not up with some beginnings, faint desires, or lazy seekings. Oh, remember your former tears. One may weep a little for sin, and yet go to hell for sin. Many, who under such a work, shake off the sense of sin, murder their convictions, and return to folly. Oh, take heed! If any draw back, the Lord will take no pleasure in them. But I hope better things of you."

Mr. Janeway was mighty in prayer, and his soul was frequently so transported in the duty, that he almost forgot whether he was in the body or out of the body. His converse with God was so familiar, and attend-

ed with such Divine consolations to his soul, that when he engaged in this duty, he found the greatest difficulty to leave it off. In his approaches to God, like Jacob, he wrestled with the Lord, and was very unwilling to rise from off his knees without his Father's blessing. He conversed with God, as a man with his friend; and on all occasions of importance, sought his direction and his blessing. His prayers were no vain oblations; but were often heard, and remarkably answered. The following is an instance. His father, being deeply exercised with affliction, and under painful apprehensions about the safety of his state, said to his son, "Oh! son, this passing into eternity is a great thing. This dying is a solemn business, and enough to make any one's heart ache, who hath not his pardon sealed, and his evidences clear for heaven. I am under no small fears for my own state, for another world. Oh, that God would clear his love! Oh, that I could cheerfully say, I can die, and am able on good grounds to look death in the face, and venture upon eternity with well-grounded peace and comfort!"

Mr. Janeway seeing his dear father so much afflicted with despondency, presently retired for the purpose of wrestling with God in prayer. He most devoutly supplicated, that God would lift up the light of his countenance upon him, and fill his soul with joy and peace in believing; that so he might

leave the world with joy. Arising from his knees, and coming to his father, he asked him how he did, but received no immediate answer. His father continued some time unable to speak, but wept profusely. After recovering himself, he burst forth into these expressions, "Oh son, now, He is come! Now, He is come! Now, He is come! I bless God I can die. The Spirit of God hath witnessed with my spirit, that I am a child of God. Now I can look up to God as my Father, and to Christ as my Redeemer. I can now say, 'This is my friend: this is my beloved.' My heart is full; it is brimfull, I can hold no more. I now know what that means, 'the peace of God which passeth understanding.' That fit of weeping which you saw me in, was a fit of overpowering love and joy. It was so great, that I could not contain myself, nor can I express what glorious discoveries God hath made to me. Had that joy been greater, I question whether it would not have separated my soul and body. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless his holy name, who hath pardoned all my sins, and sealed that pardon. Oh, now I can die. I bless God, I can die. I desire to depart and be with Christ."

The son was partaker of the father's blessing on two accounts; first, that his father was so clearly satisfied about the safety of his state; and, secondly, that this was so



evident and immediate an answer to prayer. Young Janeway, therefore, broke forth in strains of the highest joy and praise, saying, "Oh blessed, and for ever blessed be God, for his infinite grace! Oh, who would not pray unto God. Verily he is a God hearing prayer, and that our souls know right well." He then told his father how much he had been affected with his despondency; that he had been just praying with all earnestness for his soul, and how wonderfully the Lord had answered his prayer. Upon this his father experienced a fresh gush of joy, and exclaimed, "Now let thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation." "When I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil. Oh how lovely is the sight of a smiling Jesus, when one is dying! How refreshing is it, when heart and flesh and all things fail, to have God for the strength of our heart, and our portion, for ever. Having said these things, he departed, to be numbered with the blessed.

Upon the death of his father, Mr. Janeway endeavoured to supply that relation in the tender and affectionate care of his mother, sisters, and brothers. His excellent example, prudent instructions, and holy practice had the desired effect. Those who were older than himself, as well as the younger branches, loved and revered him.

Having returned, after some time, to King's

College, he continued there until he was invited to become domestic chaplain in the family of Dr. Cox; where his deportment was so sweet and obliging, and his conversation so spiritual and holy, that he gained the admiration of all. But on account of ill health he was obliged to relinquish this situation, and to try a change of air; and came to reside with his mother. Here he continued in a weak and languishing condition, in the near prospect of death, but not afraid to die. He was even ashamed of desiring life, and said, "Is there any thing here more to be desired than the enjoyment of Christ? Can I expect any thing here below comparable to that blessed vision? Oh that crown, that "rest which remaineth for the people of God!" And blessed be God I can say it is mine. "I know, that when the earthly house of this tabernacle is dissolved, I have a building of God, an house not made with hands," and therefore I desire not to be unclothed, but to be clothed upon with Christ. "To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." Through mercy, I can now speak in the language of the apostle, "I have fought a good fight; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness."

But after coming, in appearance, so near to his end, he was so far restored that his friends entertained hopes of his perfect recovery. And while God thus remembered him he did not forget God. To an intimate

friend he said, "God holds mine eyes most upon his goodness, his unmeasurable goodness; and upon the promises which are most sure and firm in Christ. His love to us is greater, more sure, more full, than ours to ourselves. For when we loved ourselves so as to destroy ourselves, he loved us so as to save us.

In a letter to a friend, under perplexing fears about the state of his soul, he writes, "Oh stand still and wonder. Behold and admire his love. Consider what thou canst discover in this precious Jesus. Here is a sea; cast yourself into it, and you shall be compassed with the height and depth, and length, and breadth of love, and be filled with all the fulness of God. Is not this enough? Wouldst thou have more? Fling away all excepting God. For God is a sufficient portion, and the only proper portion of the soul. Hast thou not tasted? Hast thou not known that his love is better than wine? He is altogether lovely. And while I write, my heart doth burn. My soul is on fire. I am sick of love. But now methinks I see you almost drowned in tears, because you feel not such workings of love to God. Weep on still, for love as well as grief has tears. And tears of love, as well as others, shall be kept in God's bottle. Know that they are no other than the streams of Christ's love flowing to thee, and from thee to him. Christ

is thus delighted in beholding his beauties in those whom he loves.”

But Mr. Janeway was not always on the mount. He had his cloudy days, as well as others. His comforts were sometimes exchanged for bitterness: and he was, at times, sorely assaulted by Satan's temptations. The enemy was permitted to come upon him as an armed man. As in the case of the apostle, lest he should be exalted above measure, the messenger of Satan was permitted to buffet him. It would have made a Christian's heart ache, to hear how grievously this gracious man was exercised with painful temptations. But he was well armed for the conflict; having on the shield of faith, wherewith to quench the fiery darts of the wicked one, he came off a complete conqueror. In the trying contest, he sent up strong cries and tears to the Lord for fresh supplies of grace.

This holy man was much afraid of spiritual declensions, both in himself and others. He ever laboured to maintain a tender conscience, and took notice of the smallest departures of his soul from God, as well as God's withdrawing from him. His great concern was to build sure, by being rooted and grounded in the faith. He also exercised a similar godly jealousy over his intimate friends and relations. To one of his brothers he wrote thus; “You live in a place, where strict and close walking with God, hath few or no examples. God's own children are too apt to forget their

first love. Our hearts are prone to be careless, and to neglect our watch. When conscience is put off with some poor excuse, religion withers. He who once seemed a zealot becomes a Laodicean; and he who once appeared an eminent saint, may afterwards come to nothing. It is too common to have a name to be alive and yet to be dead! Read this and tremble, lest it should be your case. When we are indolent and asleep, our adversary is most awake. I consider your age; I know where you dwell: I am no stranger to your temptations; therefore, I cannot help being afraid of you and jealous over you. Let me remind you of what you know already. Remember what meltings of soul you once had; how solicitously you inquired after Christ, and how earnestly you seemed to inquire the way to Zion, with your face thitherward. Oh! take heed of losing those impressions. Be not satisfied with a slight work. True conversion is a great thing, and very different from what most persons take it to be. Therefore, rest not in mere convictions; much less in a lifeless and formal profession. There is such a thing as being "almost a Christian:" as "looking back unto perdition;" as, being, "not far from the kingdom of heaven," and falling short, at last. Beware, lest you lose the reward. The promise is made to him that holdeth fast, holdeth out to the end, and overcometh. Labour to forget the things which are behind, and reach unto the things

which are before. He who is contented with just enough grace to escape hell, and get to heaven, and desires no more, may be sure, that he has none at all, and is far from the kingdom of God. Labour to enjoy converse with God. Strive to do every thing, as in his presence and for his glory. Act as in the sight of the grave and of eternity. Let us awake and fall to work in good earnest. Heaven and hell are before us. Why do we sleep? Dulness in the service of God is very uncomfortable, and at best will cost us dear: but to be contented in such a frame is the certain sign of a hypocrite. Oh how will such tremble, when God shall call them to give an account of their stewardship; and shall tell them they may be no longer stewards. Oh! live now upon the invisible realities of heaven, and let a sense of their excellencies put life into your performances. For your preciseness and singularity, you must be contented to be laughed at. A Christian's walking is not with men, but with God. He hath cause to suspect his love to God, who does not delight more in conversing with God and being conformed to him, than in conversing with men, and being conformed to the world. How can the love of God dwell in that man who liveth without God in the world?"

At the age of twenty-two, Mr. Janeway entered on the sacred work of the ministry, under a deep impression of its importance, and the worth of souls; but he never was

permitted to preach more than two sermons; which, however, he delivered with such clearness, freedom, tenderness, power, and majesty, as greatly amazed those who heard him. Both these sermons were founded on Job xx. 21. "Acquaint now thyself with him and be at peace; thereby good shall come unto thee." What he delivered was from the experience of the power of the gospel, which he had in his own heart.

During the closing scene of his life, he appeared to be absorbed in the contemplation of Christ, heaven, and eternity. He lived as a stranger in the world, and in the constant prospect of a better state. Like the pious patriarch, "he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God." His meditations, his discourse, his whole deportment, all made it appear that he was fast ripening for glory. He was never satisfied unless he was employed in those exercises which brought him nearer to God, and the kingdom of heaven. Hereby his faith was increased to full assurance. The Lord often called him up to the mount, and let him see his glory. He often feasted on the rich provisions of God's house, and enjoyed many foretastes of future blessedness. From his own happy experience he could say to others, "Oh taste and see that the Lord is good"—"Come unto me and I will declare unto you, what he hath done for my soul."

In the midst of all needful worldly comforts, he longed for death: and his thoughts of the day of judgment greatly sweetened his enjoyments. He would say, "What if the day of judgment were to come even this hour? I should be glad with all my heart. I should behold such lightnings, and hear such thunderings as Israel did at the mount; and I am persuaded, my heart would leap for joy. This I am confident of, that the meditation of that day hath even ravished my soul; and the thoughts of its certainty and nearness are more refreshing to me than all the comforts of the world. Surely, nothing can more revive my spirit, than to behold the blessed Jesus, who is the life and joy of my soul." It required no small degree of self-denial and patience, to consent to be so long separated from Him whom his soul loved.

Mr. Janeway, at length, found himself sinking into a deep consumption: but the expectoration of blood did not intimidate him, who was confident of an interest in the blood of Christ. But during the progress of his disease, he was seized with a dimness in his eyes, which terminated in the total loss of his sight. Apprehending his end to be near, he called his mother, and said, "Dear mother, I am dying; but I beseech you not to be troubled. Through mercy, I am quite above the fear of death. It is no great matter; I have nothing that troubles me, except-



ing the apprehensions of your grief. I am going to him whom I love above life." But from this fainting fit, the Lord was pleased to recover him; and for several weeks, his soul was so devoutly employed in the contemplation of Christ, and heaven, that he almost forgot his pains and sickness. His faith, his love, and his joy exceedingly abounded. He frequently exclaimed, "Oh that I could let you know what I feel! Oh! that I could show you what I now see! Oh! that I could express the thousandth part of that sweetness which I now find in Christ! You would then all think it worth your while, to make religion your chief business. Oh! my dear friends, you little think what Christ is worth upon a death-bed. I would not now for a world, nay, for a million of worlds, be without a Christ and a pardon. I would not for a world live any longer; and the very thought of a possibility of recovery makes me tremble." And when one said, that the Lord might raise him up again, he said, "And do you think to please me with that? No, friend, you are mistaken, if you think, that life, and health, and the world are pleasing to me. The world hath quite lost its excellency. Oh! how poor, and contemptible it is, in all its glory, when compared with the glory of the world, which I now live in sight of. And as for life, Christ is my life. I do tell you I so long to be with Christ, that I could be content to be cut in

pieces, and to be put to the most exquisite torments, so I might die, and be with Christ. Oh! how sweet is Jesus! 'Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly.' Death do thy worst. Death hath lost its terrors. Through grace I can say, death is nothing to me. I can as easily die as shut my eyes. I long to be with Christ. I long to die."

To his mother he said, "Dear mother I as earnestly beseech you as I ever desired any thing for you in my life, that you would cheerfully give me up to Christ. I beseech you do not hinder me now I am going to glory. I am afraid of your prayers, lest they should pull one way and mine another." Then turning to his brothers, he thus addressed them, "I charge you all, do not pray for my life. You wrong me if you do. Oh! the glory, the unspeakable glory that I now behold. My heart is full, my heart is full. Christ smiles, and I am constrained to smile. Can you find it in your hearts now to stop me, now I am going to the complete and eternal enjoyment of Christ? Would you keep me from my crown? The arms of my blessed Saviour are open to embrace me. The angels stand ready to carry my soul into his bosom. Oh! did you but see what I see, you would cry out with me, "Dear Lord, how long?" 'Come Lord Jesus, come quickly!' Oh, why are thy chariot wheels so slow in coming?"

A minister having spoken to him of the

glories of heaven, he said, "Sir, I feel something of it. My heart is as full as it can hold in this lower state. I can hold no more. Oh! that I could but let you know what I feel! Who am I, Lord, who am I, that thou shouldst be mindful of me? Why me, Lord, why me!—and pass by thousands to look upon such a wretch as I! Oh! what shall I say unto thee, thou Preserver of men! Oh! blessed, and for ever blessed be free grace! How is it Lord, that thou shouldst manifest thyself to me and not to others? "Even so, Father, because it seemed good in thy sight." Thou wilt have mercy, because thou wilt have mercy. And if thou wilt look upon such a worm, who can hinder? Who would not love thee, O blessed Father! Oh! how sweet and gracious hast thou been to me! Oh that he should have me in his thoughts before the foundation of the world!"

When he experienced any intermissions of triumphant joy, he would cry, "Hold out faith and patience, yet a little while, and your work is done. What is the matter, Oh, my soul? Wilt thou, canst thou thus unworthily slight the astonishing condescension of God? Doth it seem a small matter, that the great Jehovah should deal thus familiarly with a worm? And wilt thou pass this over, as a common mercy? What meanest thou, Oh my soul, that thou dost not constantly adore and praise this unspeakable love? Doth God deal graciously and familiarly with man;

Why art thou not, O my soul, swallowed up every moment, with his free, unparalleled, and everlasting love? Stand astonished, ye heavens, and wonder, ye angels, at this infinite grace! Was ever any one under heaven more beholden to this grace, than I? Oh! help me to praise the Lord, for his mercy endureth for ever."

One of his brothers having prayed with him, his joys became unutterable: "and I believe," says the narrator, "that it exceeds the highest strains of rhetoric to set forth to the life what this heavenly man delivered." He broke out in such exclamations as these: "Oh! he is come! he is come! How sweet, how glorious, is the blessed Jesus! How shall I speak the thousandth part of his praises! Oh! for words to set forth a little part of that excellency! But it is inexpressible. Oh how glorious and excellent is the blessed Jesus! He is altogether lovely. Come, look upon a dying man and wonder. Was there ever greater kindness? Were there ever more sensible manifestations of rich grace? Oh! why me, Lord! Why me? Surely this is akin to heaven. And if I were never to enjoy more than this, it is more than a sufficient recompense for all the torments that men and devils could inflict. If this be dying, it is sweet. This bed is soft. Christ's arms, and smiles, and love, surely would turn hell into heaven. Oh! that you did but see and feel what I do! Behold

a dying man more cheerful than you ever saw a man in health, in the midst of his sweetest worldly enjoyments! Oh! sirs, worldly pleasures are poor, pitiful, sorry things, when compared with this glory in my soul. Why should any of you be so sad, when I am so glad? This is the hour that I have waited for."

Mr. Janeway took leave of his friends every evening, hoping that he should see them no more, till the morning of the resurrection. He exhorted them, on these occasions, to make sure of a comfortable meeting in a better world. He often entreated those about him to assist him in his praises. "Oh!" said he, "help me to praise God. Henceforth, to eternity, I have nothing else to do but to love and praise the Lord. I have my soul's desires on earth. I cannot tell what to pray for which is not already given me. The wants capable of being supplied in this world are supplied. I want only one thing, and that is a speedy lift to heaven. I expect no more here. I desire no more. I can bear no more. Oh! praise, praise, praise that boundless love, which hath wonderfully looked upon my soul, and hath done more for me than for thousands of his children. "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name. O my friends, help me, help me, to admire and praise him, who hath done such astonishing wonders for my soul. He hath pardoned all my sins, and

hath filled me with his goodness. He hath given me grace and glory, and no good thing hath he withheld from me. All ye mighty angels, help me to praise God. Let every thing that hath being help me to praise him. Praise is my work now, and will be my work for ever. Hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah!"

During his sickness, he found the word of God sweet to his soul, especially the fourteenth, fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth chapters of John's gospel, and the fifty-fourth chapter of Isaiah. He often repeated, with abundant joy, those words, "With great mercies will I gather thee." A short time before his death, he said, "I have almost done conversing with mortals; I shall presently behold Christ himself, who loved me, and washed me in his blood. In a few hours I shall be in eternity, singing the song of Moses and the Lamb. I shall presently stand upon 'Mount Zion, with an innumerable company of angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect, and JESUS, the Mediator of the new covenant.' I shall hear the voice of much people, and be one amongst them, saying, 'Hallelujah! salvation, glory, and honour, and power, be unto the Lord our God.' Yet a little while, and I shall sing unto the Lamb, 'Worthy art thou to receive praise, who hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation, and hast made us kings, and priests unto God, and we shall reign

with thee for ever and ever.' And who can help rejoicing in all this?"

The day before his departure, his brother James having been praying for him, he said, "I thank thee, dear brother, for thy love. I know, thou lovest me dearly; but Christ loves me ten thousand times more. Dear brother, come and kiss me before I die." After which he said, "I shall go before thee to glory, and I hope thou wilt follow after."

A few hours before his death, he called together, his mother, and sisters, and brothers, to give them one more solemn warning, and to pray for them before he departed. His affectionate mother being first called, he thanked her for her tender love of him; and expressed his desire that she might see Christ formed in the hearts of all her children, and meet them all with joy in the day of judgment.

He prayed that his elder brother might be wholly taken up with Christ, and love to souls, and be more holy in his life, successful in his ministry, and finish his course with joy!

For his brother Andrew, living in London, he prayed that God would deliver him from the sins of the city, make him a fellow citizen with the saints, and of the household of God. "O that he may be as his name is, 'a strong man,' and that I may meet him with joy."

To James, he said, "Brother James, I hope

God hath given thee a goodly heritage. The lines have fallen to thee in pleasant places. The Lord is thy portion. Hold on, dear brother; Christ and heaven are worth striving for. The Lord give thee abundance of his grace!"

To his brother Abraham, he said, "The blessing of the God of Abraham rest upon thee! The Lord make thee the father of many spiritual children!"

To his brother Joseph, "Let HIM bless thee, O Joseph, who blessed him that was separated from his brethren. My heart hath been working towards thee, poor Joseph; and I am not without hopes, that the arms of the Almighty will embrace thee. The God of thy father bless thee."

To his sister Mary he said, "Poor sister Mary, thy body is weak, and thy days will be filled with bitterness. The Lord sweeten all with his grace and peace, and give thee health of soul. Be patient, make sure of Christ, and all is well."

To Sarah he said, "Sister Sarah, thy body is strong and healthful: O that thy soul may be so too! The Lord make thee a pattern of modesty, humility, and holiness."

To his brother Jacob he said, "The Lord make thee an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile. O that thou mayst learn to wrestle with God, and not go without a blessing."

And of his youngest brother, Benjamin,



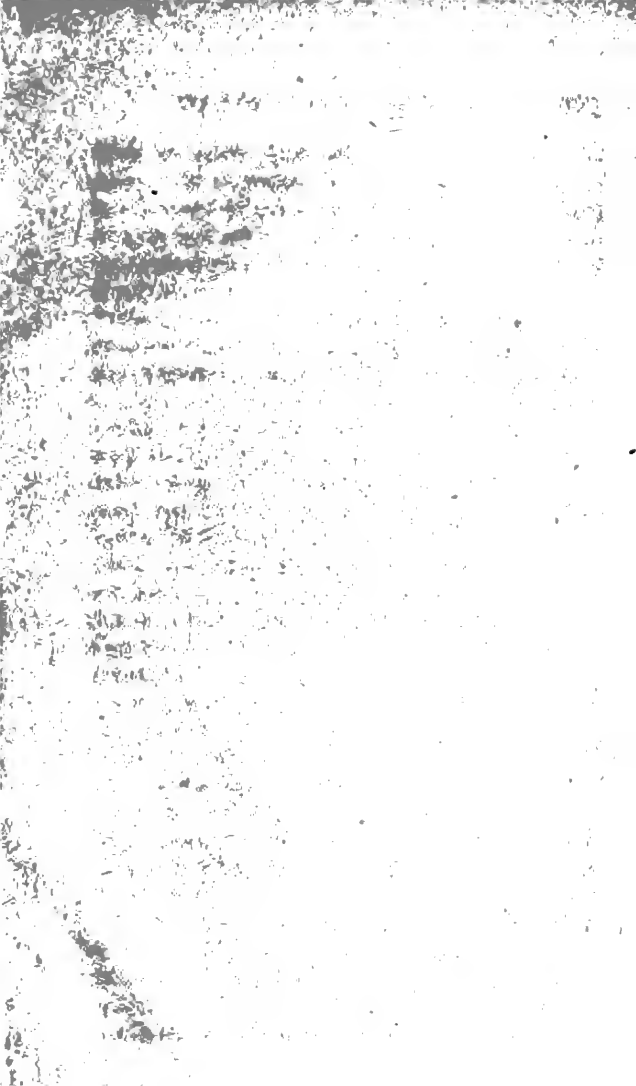
then an infant, he said, "Poor little Benjamin! O that the Father of the fatherless would take care of thee; and that thou, who hast never seen thy father on earth, mayst see him with joy in heaven. The Lord be thy Father and thy portion!"

He then said to them all, "O that none of us may be found among the unconverted, in the day of judgment. O that we may all appear with our honoured father and dear mother, before Christ, with joy; and that they may say, 'Lord, here are we, and the children which thou hast given us.' O that we may live to God here, and live with God hereafter. And now, my dear mother, brothers and sisters, farewèll. I leave you a short time. 'I commend you to God, and the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among them that are sanctified.' And now, dear Lord, my work is done. 'I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness.' 'Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly.' " Upon which he immediately departed. He died in the twenty-fourth year of his age, in the month of June, 1657.

The foregoing account of this extraordinary young man, was originally published with a recommendation by four eminent ministers of the gospel, who gave their attestation to the truth of the narrative. A

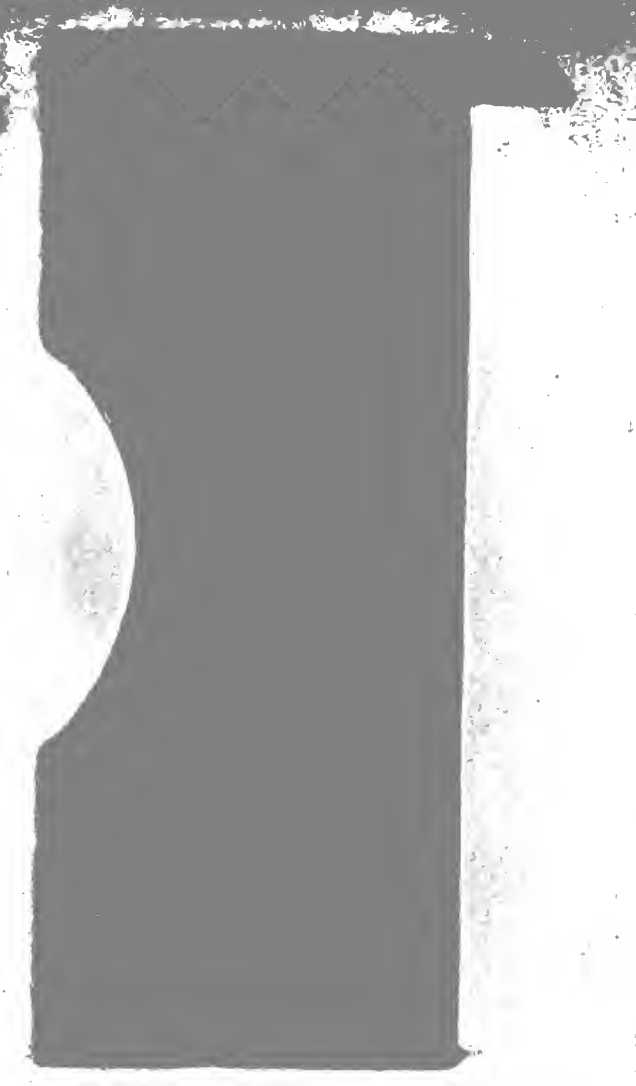
late popular writer observes, "that if ever mortal lived the life of an angel, while upon the earth, Mr. Janeway seems to have been the man." And he adds, "that his death-bed scene, above all others I have ever read of or witnessed, appears to have had in it the largest share of divine communications." Three of his brothers were in the ministry, and were all ejected for non-conformity in 1662.

THE END.









3075. HECLM.B.  
O.

Author .....

Title Owen and Janeway. ....

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